# From the Swastika[1]: the History of a Symbol

2nd, expanded and revised edition
With 600 illustrations and 1 color plate

By Dr. Jörg Lechler

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[1] Throughout the book, Dr. Lechler uses the terms “hakenkreuz”, or “hooked cross”, and “swastika” as distinctly different terms. While I will be translating “hakenkreuz” as “swastika” throughout the book for the sake of understanding, distinction will be made when Dr. Lechler specifically uses “swastika” to describe a symbol, particularly when he covers India.

**From the first harvest festival in the Third Reich**

**In the Mark Brandenburg, district of Oft-Prignitz, the harvest festival (September 10th, 1933) was opened with a parade of Bronze Age Germanic tribesmen. Costumes and cult objects were displayed, faithful replicas from around 1400 BC. The swastika carried by the Germanic women was based on the Germanic rock carving at Trosa in southern Sweden.**

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## Forward

On contentious grounds, researchers have a double duty to weigh their work carefully; with this in mind, I have broadened the material basis of this revised edition as far as possible. In doing so, I have placed particular emphasis on expanding the appendix of images and updating it to include the most recent developments. I felt I could stick to the fundamentals, not least because the reviews of the first edition showed me that I was on the right track when I endeavored to clarify the issues without preconceptions, solely through critical examination of the material, while still striving to maintain a middle ground between scientific and popular presentation in my basic methodological approach. The fact that the first edition was published in 1921 is sufficient guarantee that my book does not belong to the series of daily newspapers influenced by political developments.

The swastika has taken on a new meaning in the modern era - I am pleased that the once obscure question of its origins and original meaning will finally receive the attention it has long deserved. I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the publisher for generously and selflessly providing the book with the format in which it appears before us today.

**Dr. Jörg Lechler**

**Table of Contents**

Complete Overview of the History of the Swastika - 6
The Swastika in our Time - 18
Overview of Swastika Shapes - 23
The Significance of the Hooks - 24
5,000 Years of the Swastika (Timeline) - 27
Geographical Distribution of the Swastika (Map) - 27
Symbols from the Neolithic Period in the Nordic Cultural Sphere - 28
From the Sun Wheel to the Cross - 29
Christianity - 33
Linear Pottery Culture - 49
Tripod - 50
Troy - 53
Mycenae (Greece) - 55
Crete - 58
Greece - 60
Cyprus - 66
Egypt - 68
Italy - 70
Celts - 72
Rome - 75
Bronze Age Finds from Germanic Regions - 77
Germanic Tribes (From the Beginning of our Calendar) - 80
Germanic Tribes (From the Beginning of the Migration Period) - 88
Slavs and the Baltic Region - 89
Asia Minor - 90
Caucasus - 90
Islam - 91
Africa - 93
The Creation of the World As Depicted on a Carpet - 94
India and Tibet - 96
Malay Archipelago - 98
China - 99
Japan - 105
America - 106
Nordic Christianity - 110
Coats of Arms, Trademarks, Chisel Marks - 113
Folk Art - 115
In the Third Reich - 118

## Complete Overview of the History of the Swastika

Who still thinks much about Turnvater Jahn, who in today's language could be described as the creator of military sports? With his “gymnastics,” he educated German youth in military thinking after the collapse of Prussia in 1806; not only that, he also inspired them with enthusiasm for German prehistory. If he could walk through the streets today, he would not need to ask what the swastika flags meant; he would immediately understand their nationalistic significance and feel right at home, for it was he who introduced his era, and thus us, to the swastika; he also wrote his “frisch, fromm, froh, frei” (fresh, pious, happy, free) in the shape of a swastika, thereby consciously linking it to the prehistory of our people. In his time, the first major excavations took place in Germany, which yielded Germanic graves from the beginning of our calendar. Many of the urns containing the ashes of our ancestors bore the swastika; thus, he adopted this symbol as a special German and Germanic sign.

Today, when the swastika flag flies everywhere in Germany alongside the black, white, and red flag—created by the Iron Chancellor Bismarck—the question of the origin, meaning, and emergence of the swastika has become a common one.

Five millennia looks down on us as the swastika greets us, and when its history is recounted below, we must not only take a walk through five millennia, but also embark on a journey across the globe.
The most surprising thing for those who have not yet considered its origin is the fact that the swastika is used today in a wide variety of countries. We find it on the combat vehicles of the English artillery; on Latvian and Finnish aircraft; on Spanish and Icelandic steamships, as shipping company insignia, and in the political struggle of the Catalan independence movement. But the swastika can also be found on the other side of the world, as shown by the adoption of the staff flag on the Chinese-Japanese theater of war (Pg. 18, Fig. 2.)
But it is not only in the present day that it occurs so frequently in various places; we also find it among many peoples of ancient times, albeit not simultaneously. Even among the same people, its frequency varies greatly over time. In some areas, it is completely unknown, as in ancient Mesopotamia. This easily leads to the question: If the swastika appears in so many places around the world, did it arise independently here and there; were humans naturally inclined to come up with this shape? Is it even possible to arrive at a tangible, reliable conclusion in this investigation?
With the right methodological approach, it is most likely that we will arrive at a clear and unambiguous conclusion: through painstaking, scientific detail work, each individual swastika find is dated precisely. Once this has been done, it becomes apparent that in these individual countries, the swastika only appeared at successive intervals, and the further away they are from Europe, the more recent the appearance - we then have further irrefutable proof that the symbol of the swastika spread from one place on earth; everywhere, it is not merely an ornament, but has both auspicious and protective meanings, and is closely associated with the sun, the return of light, the cycle of life, and infinity. To assess what the swastika means, as well as to explain its origins, one can only look to antiquity, examining each find in terms of its meaning and significance, and attempting to evaluate it.
The question of the meaning of the swastika cannot be answered by focusing exclusively on the swastika itself, but rather by considering the entire range of existing symbols, as they are interrelated, and allow conclusions to be drawn from one to the other.

When the persecution of Christians began under Nero, Christianity had not yet developed a fixed common symbol. The fish could be considered the closest thing to a general Christian symbol and sign of recognition. Its use can be explained by the fact that the Greek word for fish, ichthys, contains the first letters of "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior." It was not until the 2nd century that the wheel cross and the swastika became common Christian symbols. Both stand side by side as equals, with the swastika even predominating. Neither symbol was invented by Christians, but had been in use for thousands of years. The wheel cross, two perpendicular diameters crossing each other in a circle, was one of the main symbols of the Neolithic period. It was the symbol of the sun[2] - we call it the sun wheel because that is what the pagan Germanic tribes called it.

In the Old Icelandic writings 3.B., in which the knowledge of the "Stern-Oddi" has been handed down to us, he always refers to the sun as the "wheel of the sun" and uses the radius, i.e. the wheel spoke, as a unit of measurement[3]; Pg. 34, Fig. 11 aptly shows that the representation of the sun as a wheel goes back to nature observation in northern latitudes[4]. In addition to the sun wheel, the circular disc is also an ancient symbol for the sun (and perhaps also for the moon). Equal circles also appear as sun ideograms, (Pg. 28, Fig. 3).

The equal-armed cross is derived from the wheel cross, in which the spokes are detached from the wheel cross yet retained their symbolic meaning. The equal-armed cross later developed into the Latin cross (page 16).

In the Neolithic period, the Northern Europeans, the pre-Germanic peoples, used other symbols: the crutch cross, the cogwheel, the staff with a crossbar, the forked symbol, the comb pattern, and the double axe. Some of these symbols merge into one another, such as the cogwheel and the cross. Although we cannot say with complete certainty what celestial phenomena they represent, their cosmic significance is entirely certain, because the same symbols appear in Mesopotamia in the period in question (3rd millennium BC), and the crutch cross, cross, equilateral circles, and cogwheel are undoubtedly planetary symbols there; that the swastika is also a planetary symbol, namely of the sun, can be proven indirectly. Between the above-mentioned symbols, in the area of the South Indo-Germans, from the lower Danube region to Bohemia, stands the swastika. Since all the other symbols have cosmic significance, it follows that the swastika also has an astral, cosmic meaning. Among the above-mentioned symbols, the sun wheel occupies the most prominent place. Since the swastika, as we shall see, has been closely associated with the sun wheel for thousands of years, it is natural to regard the swastika as a cross, in which the attached hooks are intended to indicate the movement of the sun, its ascent and descent from the summer solstice to the winter solstice and vice versa.

We might think that the sun should be depicted as a smooth disc with straight rays. However, if we look at paintings, we find that the rays of the sun are almost always curved, swirling, or flaming. There is ample evidence of this in every art history book; it suffices here to reproduce the examples in Pg. 29, Figs. 2, 3, 6, 7, and 9. But even in Roman times, we find the same representation in cult images, such as on the

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[2] Monteilus in the journal "Prometheus" in 1905 and "Mannus", a journal for prehistory, in 1909/1915.

[3] Otto Sigrid Reuter: "Oddi Helason", "Mannus", VI. supplementary volume, 1928.

[4] Herman Wirth has sparked widespread interest in symbolic history. In his writings, particularly in his work "Die heilige Urschrift der Menschheit" ("The Sacred Origins of Mankind"), he presented extensive material and argued that the sun wheel was derived from the solar year based on the circle of the horizon, a view that does not fundamentally contradict previous theories, but rather expands upon them and appears to be entirely compatible with them.

Mithras stone from Schwarzerden, Pg. 32, Fig. 15: on the left is the sun, on the right the moon, the latter as a bull's head, but the sun as a face with rays turning to the right and left. Indian representations of the sun show very similar concepts (Pg. 24, Fig. 6). Going further back, we find the sun, moon, and Ishtar star (Venus) carved side by side on Assyrian boundary stones from the 12th century BC: the star is seven-pointed, the moon crescent-shaped, and the sun is designed as a cross. Between the pointed oval arms of the cross, four bundles of rays bent in the same direction shoot out, forming a figure deceptively similar to a swastika, (Pg. 24, Fig. 2); this is significant because the swastika is completely foreign to Babylonian-Assyrian culture. The sun was depicted in so many forms with hook-like rays illustrating its movement that it seems very possible that the swastika itself represents a moving sun cross.
The triskelion (the three-legged symbol, the triquetrum or triskelion) is inseparable from the swastika. In this symbol, we can still see that the bent rays really do represent the movement of rising and falling. We know with certainty that the triskelion is a symbol of the sun. The legs often appear quite naturally as human legs. Sometimes the sun wheel can also be found at the pivot point of the three legs, (Pg. 50, Fig. 2), or it is formed as a three-legged sun face, as seen in the relief from Bedjae, (Pg. 51, Fig. 9), where Baal, “the eternal sun king,” is explicitly invoked.

The swastika did not undergo any fundamental change in meaning anywhere, only acquiring a more general meaning and thus further possible applications, as we can observe in many symbols. There are many instances of direct fusion of the swastika with obvious sun symbols, such as on the Trojan spindle whorl, (Pg. 53, Fig. 16), or the stone sculpture of Celtic origin from Scotland, where the swastika stands in the center of concentric circles, (Pg. 73, Fig, 24). Renowned researchers such as Count d'Alviella, [Alexandre] Betrand, [Joseph] Déchelette, [Oscar] Monteilus, and Ludvig Müller have always emphasized the connection between the swastika and the sun; they explained it as having been created by adding hooks to the cross or from the sun wheel. It cannot be our task to repeat all the explanations that have been attempted so far, especially since most of them lack any real basis. However, it is necessary to pick out those that can still be found in popular literature today.

There was a time when people tried to explain cultural phenomena in Europe simply by attributing them to influences from the Orient; the discovery of Sanskrit in India contributed to this, because the age of the poetry found was greatly overestimated. However, it was correctly recognized (Franz Bopp, 1863) that the language must be closely related to most European languages because of their similarity, and this led to the doctrine that all peoples with languages related to Sanskrit (Indo-Europeans) must have originated from a common homeland, initially assuming this to be India. However, the impossibility of this assumption was soon recognized, and the origin was moved to the highlands of Iran, a region called “Ariana” in Sanskrit texts, meaning “home of the Aryans.” Today, the majority of researchers agree that the only real homeland and point of origin is Europe, with the exception of its southern part. Linguists and archaeologists still disagree on the exact boundaries of this area of origin - the former assume a larger area, stretching from Lithuania to the Volga, while the latter assume the area around the Danish islands.

The swastika also occurs in India, where it is known as “swastika” when turned to the right and “sauvastika” when turned to the left. “Swastika” means “good luck” in Greek (Greek lettering). Here, people have tried to link the swastika with the fire drill, the device used to make fire, (Pg. 24, Fig. 22). However, its description in the text of the “Rigveda” does not in the least suggest the shape of the swastika - even if we admit that two pieces of wood were placed crosswise on top of each other to insert

the drill bit in “more sophisticated” drills, thus forming an equal-armed cross, for which there is no evidence, it would still have to be proven how the swastika was supposed to have emerged from the equal-armed cross in the fire drill. The four points sometimes found in the corners, as in Pg. 56, Figs. 5-8, cannot be explained as nails to support this assumption, because if a materialistic explanation is deemed necessary, these nails would have to hold something, which they cannot do outside the arms of the cross. The Rigveda passage (X. 62. 7) also cannot be used as evidence, as Prof. Schubring[5] also confirmed to me. If it had been admissible, it would have proven the existence of the swastika in India in the 2nd millennium BCE, since the Rigveda is generally considered to have been written around 1500 BCE.

In his book “Das Geheimnis des Hakenkreuzes” (“The Secret of the Swastika”, 1921), [Otto] Grabowski claims that the swastika was, in a sense, the wooden flywheel of the fire drill. This is likely to be a purely theoretical consideration which, as practice has shown, is incorrect, because a flywheel would never be made in the shape of a swastika, but as a wheel or square with two diagonal pieces of wood, as this is the only way to distribute the weight correctly. The other group of people who want to derive the swastika from the fire drill claim that the swastika does not refer to the flywheel of the drill, but, as already explained above, to the base on which the drill worked as it rotated. The ends of the cross could have been provided with lateral extensions for better fastening, but such an explanation is of no use, as it is not clear what purpose this improvement would have served[6]. In reality, we first find the swastika around 500 BC in India. It was unknown before that. One could counter this by pointing out that in the “Ramayana,” an epic poem, it is clearly stated that King Bharata had a swastika affixed to the stern of his ship. The “Ramayana” is believed to date from the 8th century BC., but, as Prof. Slotti of Jena[7] informed me, only the oldest part can be assumed to date from the 5th century BC; the rest is younger, so even this evidence does not take us beyond the period in which archaeological monuments bearing the swastika have been handed down to us.

For the question of the origin and meaning of the swastika, the swastika of India must therefore be evaluated in the same way as the other finds from other countries - it confirms the solar meaning of the swastika, its connection with the cycle of the year, with lawfulness and recurrence, and thus supports our assumption that the swastika has had this meaning from the beginning. Even if the origin of the swastika could be proven to come from the fire device, the swastika would still be a symbol of fire; but a symbol of the sun is also a symbol of fire, namely that of the heavenly fire, and the Persian carpet (page 94) gives us a good indication of this. In this carpet, the swastika forms the center, from which flames shoot out, from which planets and stars separate, so the swastika is definitely understood cosmically as a celestial body. The opposite is also true: in the legend of the creation of earthly fire, it was associated with the swastika, the heavenly fire. There are several legends about the origin of earthly fire, the best known being the Greek myth of Prometheus. Prometheus, who brought fire down from heaven, is punished by the gods for doing so. This legend in particular, through the similarity of the name Prometheus to the Indian name for the fire drill, Pramantha, illustrates that the transfer of the swastika to the fire drill took place in the above sense.

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[5] Likely Walther Schubring, an Indologist and expert on Sanskrit and the canons of Jainism.

[6] The derivation of the swastika from the fire drill is emphasized in particular by Driesmann, "Mensch der Urzeit" (“Man of Primitive Times”), Stuttgart 1907; E. Krause, Tuiskoland, Glogau 1891; G.v. Liszt, “Die Bilderschrift der Ario-Germanen” ("The Pictographic Writing of the Aryan-Germans"), Leipzig 1910.

[7] Likely referring to Dr. Friedrich Slotty, a professor for the German University in Prague and expert on Sanskrit.

From the outset, attempts were made to label the swastika as a symbol of fertility by deriving it from the fire drill. [Eugène] Burnouf explained the fire device as representing the male and female principles, from whose union the god Angi (fire) is born. Accordingly, the swastika was also supposed to reflect the male and female principles. The fact that the right-facing swastika represents the female gender and the left-facing swastika the male gender is easily explained by the fact that in India, all things that come in pairs are divided into two genders. Even if a fire device in some Indian temples had been given the shape of a swastika (despite diligent efforts, including inquiries with Indians, I have not yet been able to find evidence for this claim), this would only show that the device was given the shape of a swastika for the sake of the meaning associated with it.
Grabowski, who apparently realizes that the derivation of the swastika from the fire device is not yet convincing enough, invents a "horizontal spindle drill," which he believes he can find in various drawings, but only by first constructing how such a horizontal spindle might have been drawn. Unfortunately, this construction has the flaw that a swastika does not appear in it, so that everything can now be very easily proven.

It has been claimed that the swastika originally represented Thor's hammer - in fact, it has appeared in more recent times as a symbol of Thor. However, this case shows once again that Thor, as the supreme god, had characteristics that led the Germanic peoples to assign the swastika as his symbol. The situation is very similar with the Lithuanian god "Perkun," where it is said to represent his arrow. The swastika is also said to be the monogram of Christ, where it is supposed to represent two crossed Zs, because the name Jesus is also written as "Zesus". However, in 3000 BC, the swastika already existed, and if, as Pg. 46, Fig 42 shows, the swastika was actually used as the signature of Christ in Christian times, this only proves once again that great importance was attached to bringing this sacred symbol under the banner of Christianity. As we have already pointed out, the Indian evidence is far too recent to make any other meaning of the swastika plausible.
Let us now ask ourselves whether there is even older evidence that the swastika was a fertility symbol from the outset. Let us return to Troy: in the second city, a series of female idols bearing the swastika have been found. European Stone Age people, who were farmers, would also have known that the sun is the giver of life, so that the swastika, without prejudice to its symbolism of the sun, could also be a symbol of life and creation (cf. page 14, paragraph 2). [Reinhold] Lichtenberg's conclusion is therefore correct (Memnon, vol. 3) when he says of the idols: "Since the swastika, which is sometimes represented by the tripod, and is an ancient symbol of life among the Aryan peoples, it is easy to see that a female figure bearing this sign in this place can be nothing other than the mother goddess." A sun symbol can indeed very easily become a symbol of life, as we still speak today of Christ as "the sun of life".

In the past, the swastika was often derived from the Phoenician "tau," which is similar to it in its younger form (symbol). According to Schulz (Memmon, vol. 3), the entire Phoenician alphabet, which the Phoenicians simply adopted, is composed of individual symbols of the heavens (signs of the zodiac, planets). As much as the entire origin of letters, characters, and especially the question of their age, as well as runes, has been called into question today, it is certain that characters were early on associated with the heavens, be it the planets or the zodiac signs; it would therefore not be surprising if the sun appeared as a swastika and served as the original form of a letter. At least, this is entirely possible for the eastern Mediterranean region. However, no swastika finds from the Phoenicians of the period in question are known; rather, we can observe that they only adopted the swastika at a later date. The oldest

Phoenician finds are coins from the 4th century BC, which originate from the western colonization area of the Phoenicians; here they learned it from contact with Western peoples, because even in Palestine, both in the area of the Amorites and the Hebrews, it was unknown before their incorporation into the Roman Empire. Two cases where it was found on pottery shards show, through the type of pottery, a connection with the non-Semitic “Sea Peoples.”
The oldest “tau” has the shape of an equal-armed cross (symbol) or a lying cross (symbol). In this form, Ezekiel IX, 4 and 6 depicts people whom God spares with the tau on their foreheads; the tau is therefore the sign of life there, and thus fits in perfectly with the other symbolism of the cross. Since the alphabet is closely linked to myth, and mystical symbolism has made extensive use of this material (Schneider, “Der kretische Ursprung des Alphabets” (“The Cretan Origin of the Alphabet”, Leipzig 1913)), it is no wonder that we see the swastika associated with the myth of the letters in Crete. This explains why the swastika is associated with the labyrinth and the Minotaur - the labyrinth, to which the legend of Helen and all those of the captive sun maiden are linked, leads us back to the sun connection of the swastika.

In more recent times, the view has been strongly expressed on several occasions that the swastika was basically, i.e. originally, a moon symbol. (See Georg Wilke, “Neuere Arbeiten über das Hakenkreuz” ("Recent Works on the Swastika"), Mannus, vol. 15, 1923; Wolfgang Schlutz, “Zeitrechnung und Weltordnung” ("Chronology and World Order"), Mannus-Bibl. 35, 1924; Erwin Richter, “Das Hakenkreuz als Führer zur altgermanischen Kultur” ("The Swastika as a Guide to Ancient Germanic Culture"), Mannus, Vol. 21, 1931; Hammer, “Blätter für deutschen Sinn” ("Hammer, Sheets for German Sense"), 32nd year, 1933, No. 749, 750, “Neues von Hakenkreuz” ("News About the Swastika")). In his review of the first edition of my book, Wilke readily admits that “it is undoubtedly correct that in more recent periods the swastika is very frequently, and perhaps even predominantly, a symbol of the sun.”; the question of the assessment and meaning of the swastika is basically a question of principle and method. I believe that one must start from the meaning that the swastika has in different parts of the world, and it is precisely there that we see that it has a common meaning everywhere - everywhere it is closely related to the sun. It is precisely this uniformity, apart from the chronological sequence in the individual neighboring countries, that is the strongest evidence that the swastika really did spread from one region of the world. If it were not originally a symbol of the sun, it would be inexplicable why it has the same meaning in America, China, and India as it did among the Bronze Age Germanic tribes, the Celts, and the Greeks. If we start from the evaluation of the individual swastika finds and write down all the meanings that arise, we arrive at a series that contains no contradictions, but in which one meaning naturally follows from the other.
On page 17, I list the meanings used in the discussion of the finds.
The resulting series therefore does not contain any contradictions, but shows that it can be traced back to the sun at its root and that the moon only appears secondarily, incorporated into the swastika symbolism through the bull-human duality, namely because of the concept of creation associated with it. In addition, in earlier times, namely in the 2nd century BC, the symbolism of the moon in connection with the swastika was only found in the eastern Mediterranean region. Among the Germanic peoples, on the other hand, with whom Richter particularly wants to associate the moon with the swastika, this possibility only appeared at the beginning of our calendar, again influenced by the same cultural center in the eastern Mediterranean region, because in 214 BC the Goths migrated from the Baltic Sea region to the Black Sea, and as a result, a whole series of cultural phenomena originating in the Hellenistic cultural sphere appeared among them. These new influences then flowed back to their homeland through the Goths. Salin

(“Altgermanische Tierornamentik” ("Old German Animal Ornamentation", Stockholm 1904)) traced this Gothic influence in various artistic expressions, and we also find clear evidence of it in the swastika, as shown on Pg. 23, Fig. 20, which can be found at the same time in southern Russia among the Goths there and in Brandenburg.
Among the Bronze Age Germanic peoples, I see no way of recognizing the moon in their symbolism. The find cited by Richter from Tschetzschow, Pg. 79, Fig. 14, provides no clue in this regard; rather, the center of the disc features a cross formed by five circles, around which the swastika is grouped, the design of which gives no indication whatsoever of crescent moons. Broadly speaking, the curved swastika hooks are attached to the center circle of the cross and run in a curved tip. The cross, together with the rayed rim, classifies the disc as a Bronze Age sun disc. Since we find the meaning of the sun in America, Asia, and throughout Europe, we conclude that this was also the original meaning. Only with this assumption can the legend of the fire drill be incorporated into the series of meanings, whereas this would be absolutely impossible if we assumed the original meaning as a moon symbol. In addition, various representations from which the solar meaning of the swastika derives can be traced back to common Indo-European ideas, such as 3. B. Pg. 90, Fig. 12, where the moon goddess in the form of an antelope attacks the sun, represented as a swastika, protected by the archer. Common Indo-European ideas are purely Stone Age in origin, thus taking us back to the time when the earliest swastika finds were made.

Among the popular books published last year, mention should be made of Wilhelm Scheuermann's book “Woher kommt das Hakenkreuz?” ("Where does the swastika come from?"), which describes in detail the history of research into the swastika. Scheuermann adds a new explanation to the existing explanations for the origin of the swastika, but it is very unlikely to be correct. Basically, he explains that the swastika originated from a ruse by Trojan priests, an origin that has only a very tenuous connection to its later meaning. To establish this connection, he draws on the ancient fire drill theory, which he combines with his own.
Several round discs made of rock crystal were found in Troy. Scheuermann explains that when such rock crystal discs are placed on top of each other and rotated against each other, the reflection of the light produces the physical phenomenon of Airy's spirals, which the priests then exploited to create the swastika symbol. A symbol as powerful as the swastika, which dominates the imagination of mankind, can hardly be attributed to such a feat. Rather, one must assume that an all-encompassing world of ideas, such as the strange events of the solar cycle, served as the basis for the creation of this symbol. Incidentally, the meaning and significance of the symbol should be researched and explored, its appearance explained, but not a materialistic cause for its origin sought.
Herman Wirth also commented on the question of the origin of the swastika ("Vom Ursprung und Sinn des Hakenkreuzes" ("The Origin and Meaning of the Swastika"), “Germanien”, monthly journal for prehistory, 1933, issue 6). He considers it a sun sign and originally a Nordic symbol and explains it from the idea of the solar year as a circle. According to him, the origin of the symbol is the wheel cross with south-north and east-west lines as axes, at the ends of which the sun was indicated as a small circle or sphere (cf. Pg. 24, Fig. 23). Over time, the outer circle disappeared, and the sun spheres at the ends of the cross became open loops or hooks, as if written in italics, so that the curved swastika shape was,

according to him, the original form. The rounded ends of the hooks then became angular through carving in wood.[8]
Completely absurd, of course, is the claim that appeared in a popular publication that the swastika is 100,000 years old because primitive humans used fire drills to light fires during the Ice Age. This conclusion is based on the same logic as claiming that National Socialism is 5,000 years old because the swastika is that old, quite apart from the fact that, according to the above explanations about the relationship between the swastika and the fire drill, it should be clear that the swastika cannot be derived from the fire drill.

This concludes our examination of the opinions expressed thus far, and we can summarize by saying that most of the earlier explanations can be understood as having failed to consider all of the material, but instead emphasized episodes or particular features, and did not proceed using the only possible archaeological method. Those of the earlier interpretations that put forward compelling reasons do not contradict the above derivation, and may even confirm it, if one bears in mind how quickly the meaning of a symbol that has become commonplace can be expanded.
We have seen that, based on the age comparison of the finds, we can conclude that the swastika originated from one place, namely from the Stone Age circle of the Bandkeramik culture. This leads us to the question: Which people inhabited these areas at that time? We know today that during the Ice Age, races were sharply divided culturally and lived in opposition to one another. It was not until the transition to the geological present that we find different racial types living side by side in a cultural layer (Ofnet Cave). At the beginning of the Neolithic period, the Indo-European proto-people formed. By the end of the Stone Age in 2000 BC, the Indo-Europeans had already settled most of Europe and large parts of the Near East through continuous strong migration from their immediate homeland. Here they called themselves Aryans, a name that is now used as a synonym for Indo-Europeans. With the dawn of the Bronze Age, the formation of the individual Indo-European tribes and peoples finally took place, which we can already identify with later names that are familiar to us today thanks to historical records.
During the Neolithic period in 3000 BC, the Indo-Europeans already appeared as two sharply divided large groups, the Northern and Southern Indo-Europeans. The former were centered in the Danube region, the latter on the Baltic Sea (Denmark, southern Sweden, northern Germany). Archaeologically, the two groups are very distinct from each other; the northern group is characterized by a specific skull shape, burial and settlement patterns, weaponry, and, in particular, deep-cut pottery, while the southern group is often referred to simply as the “band ceramists” due to the typical ribbon decoration on their vessels. Because later changes led to the two groups becoming western and eastern in early history, linguists refer to both groups, which are also linguistically distinct, as Western and Eastern Indo-Germans. The West Indo-Germans – Kentum peoples (archaeologically North Indo-Germans) – include 3. B. Germanic peoples, Celts, Illyrians, Italics, Greeks; the East Indo-Germans – Satem peoples (archaeologically South Indo-Germans) – include Thracians, Phrygians, Dacians, Albanians, Indians. The equation of the deep-cut cultures with the North Indo-Germans and the band ceramists with the South Indo-Germans comes from Kossinna (cf. Mannus, vols. 1 and 2).
During the period in question when the swastika first appeared, i.e., when it was first documented by finds, we find it in the area from Bohemia to Transylvania, which was inhabited at that time by South

[8] Rudolf Moschkau provides a brief summary of the views and literature in “Das Hakenkreuz in 5 Jahrtausenden” ("The Swastika in Five Millennia") as an explanation for a school wall chart published by Schulbilderverlag F.E. Wachsmuth, Leipzig, 1933.

Indo-Germans; consequently, the first use of the swastika can be attributed to them. Since Herbitz's Bohemian find belongs to the linear band ceramics decorated with rows of incisions, it is not unimportant to point out that the area of distribution of band ceramics also extends to northern Germany, namely to the line between Brunswick and Hanover, and in the west even crosses the Weser River[9]. In this area, it would therefore be possible for Stone Age swastikas to come to light at any time. Since the oldest swastikas have angular shapes, and are therefore stylistically perhaps even foreign to the band ceramics culture, one might assume that Stone Age swastikas could also be found within the deep-cut ceramics, a view that Schuchhardt has also expressed on occasion.

In addition, according to Roska's excavation findings, no spiral-decorated shards have been found in Tordos I, which means that the swastika is associated with a cultural group of Nordic origin, which we also find evidence of in Erösd-Priesterhügel[10], another Transylvanian site where swastikas have been found (Nordic amphorae).

At the beginning of the Bronze Age, tribes that we attribute to the Illyrian ethnic group lived in Bohemia and the adjacent areas to the northeast and southeast. It is therefore entirely possible that the Stone Age cultures of this area also belonged to the original tribe of the Illyrians, a view held by Georg Wilke[11], who classifies the Thraco-Phrygian ethnic group as belonging to the special group of painted band ceramics.

If we trace the chronological spread, we arrive at Troy. Which people lived here at that time? The culture found at the Yortan site (on the Kaikos River) is completely identical to that of Troy, which is why this cultural group is also called the Troy-Yortan culture. It is also important to note that the same culture has been found on the European side of the Dardanelles. Furthermore, very similar finds have also come to light in eastern Bulgaria, especially at the Sveti-Kyrillovo site near Stara Zagora (where the swastika also appears). From here, the connections extend even further to Old Serbia and Bosnia. This province of finds stands in sharp contrast to the Linear Pottery culture, especially the painted pottery of the Galician-Transylvanian-Romanian region. In Asia Minor, the Trojan-Yortan culture now spread via Mysia and Pisidia to the area around Konya far to the east, so that during the Trojan II period (2600-1900 BC) we have a unified West Asian ethnic group[12].

Now, around 2,000, we find evidence of the Luwians in the same area, so there is no reason to doubt that the Trojan-Yortan culture can be equated with the Luwian people. The Luwian language is extremely ancient and closely related to the Indo-European language of the Hittites, the Kanian. Archaeological findings force us to assume that the pre-Hellenic population of Greece also absorbed the Luwian tribes, which gives the question of the Luwian people a special general cultural-historical value. (See Albrecht Götze: Kleinasien, in the book series “Kulturgeschichte des alten Orients” ("Cultural History of the Ancient Orient"), Munich, 1933.) The Luwian language, like the Canian language, has presented researchers with entirely new problems. Although closely related to Indo-European, they cannot be derived from it alone; they are more like sister languages, which necessarily presupposes that they and

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[9] See the map by Hermann Schroller: “Die nordischen Kulturen in ihren Beziehungen zur Bandkeramik” ("The Nordic cultures in relation to the Linear Pottery culture"), “Nachrichten aus Niedersachsens Urgeschichte” ("News from Lower Saxony's prehistory") 1932. See also Carl Engel: “Übersicht der jungsteinzeitlichen Kulturen im Mittelelbegebiet” ("Overview of Neolithic cultures in the Middle Elbe region"), Mannus, 3tschr. f. Vorgesch. VII. Ergänzungsbd. 1929.

[10] See H. Schroller: “Die Stein- und Kupferzeit Siebenbürgens” ("The Stone and Copper Age in Transylvania"), Berlin, 1932.

[11] Georg Wilke, “Recent Works on the Swastika”, Mannus, Vol. 15, 1923.

[12] In Asia Minor, the area of the Troya-Yortan culture coincides with that of the s- and nd-place names, just as the area of the Urfirnis coincides with that of the pre-Hellenic s- and nth-names. All Greek words ending in issa and ossos also belong to the Luwian language, such as 3. B. Larissa, Halikarnassos.

Indo-European have a common root that is older[13]. We owe the Luwian and Hittite written documents to German excavations that uncovered the state archives of the Hittite capital in Boghasköi; these documents are 500 years older than all previous Indo-European-Aryan language finds.
In connection with our question about the swastika, it is particularly noteworthy that the main deity of the Hittite pantheon, which was adopted from the Proto-Hittites (Proto Hattier), is the sun goddess of Arinna, which is extremely important for the interpretation of the "maternal" Trojan goddess figurines. The sun god standing next to the sun goddess of Arinna is only significant in the realm of the night sun; he is the sun god in the "water," while the consort of the sun goddess of Arinna is the weather god in the form of a bull.
If the culture of Troy was already closely linked to that of the rest of the Aegean, i.e., the Greek islands and the mainland, the Aegean region underwent further Indo-Europeanization in waves over the last two millennia before Christ, i.e., Indo-Europeanic ethnic groups displaced the original population ("Pelasgians," see above). The Dorian migration can only be regarded as the last of these advances, which simultaneously brought the West Indo-European element and thus the actual Greek language to the Aegean region. If we can therefore describe the population of Troy as Luwians belonging to the Indo-Europeans in the sense described above, we can further conclude that in the period that followed, the swastika appeared mostly only in the settlement and migration areas of East Indo-European "Aryan" ethnic groups, not only in Greece but also in Asia Minor. However, it would not be correct to imagine a completely homogeneous ethnic group as the inhabitants of these countries. Rather, more or less powerful social classes (especially in Asia Minor) emerged as the political leaders of the long-established population; we would therefore have to speak of Indo-Europeanized peoples in the final analysis.

One thing is certain: we hardly ever find the swastika among Semitic ethnic groups. It is even foreign to the Sumerian (Indo-European) Akkadian (Semitic) culture of Mesopotamia. Although the swastika can be found on painted pottery from Susa (Pg. 90, Figs. 3-5) and other similar finds in Mesopotamia, painted pottery cannot be attributed to the Babylonian cultural group. The same is true of the swastika in Egypt, as it is also foreign to the Egyptian people; wherever it is found in their territory, the circumstances of its discovery always indicate that it is the result of foreign influence from the flourishing Cretan culture of the 2nd millennium or, as in Naukratis, that the objects belonged to Greek nationals (cf. Pg. 68).
If we follow the western branch of its spread, we see that the swastika came to the West Germanic peoples via this branch. The Etruscans of Asia Minor in Italy, who also adopted it, do not belong to this group. It becomes more difficult, however, when we trace the eastern route of the swastika. It seems to have come to India through the lively trade that developed before and during Alexander's campaigns, but whether this was merely through cultural transfer or through immigration cannot be determined, although one would be inclined to believe the former. The fact that the meaning of the symbol did not change in any way as it spread further, even to China, is shown by the decree of Empress Wu (684-704 AD), who introduced the swastika in a circle (symbol) as a character for the word sun, (Pg. 100, Fig. 3), and the supplementary decree of Emperor Tai Tsung (763-779), who prohibited the use of the swastika as a decorative pattern in order to protect the exalted symbol, (Pg. 101, Fig. 6). Even in America, the swastika has its old meaning, appearing on the magic chains of medicine men, (Pg. 108, Figs. 26-28) and even becomes a distinguishing mark of the followers of the sun religion, as among the Navajo of New Mexico

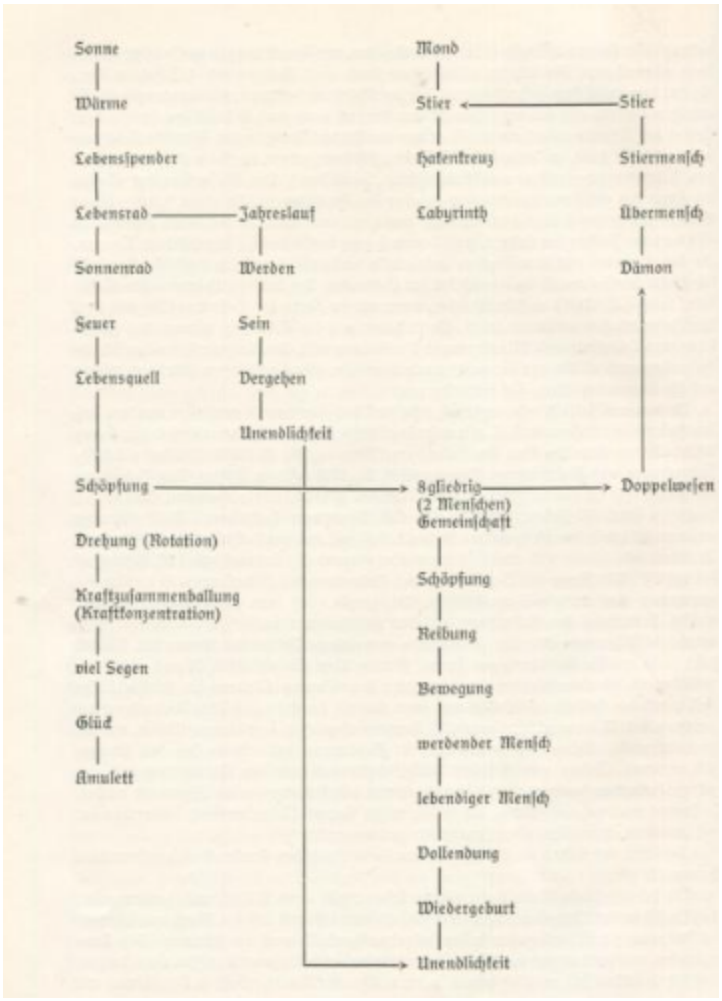
[13] The Viennese Indo-Europeanist Kretzschmar and E. Forrer in particular have dealt with this problem; see Forrer, "Neue Probleme zum Ursprung der indogermanischen Sprache" ("New Problems Concerning the Origin of the Indo-European Language"), Mannus, 1934.

and the Pima of Arizona, (Pg. 107, Figs. 19, 20), or among the Aztecs, where the sun wheel means day, the swastika meant the year, and the union of the swastika and the sun disc means the passage of time.

A passage from Minutius Felix shows very nicely how to think about the transition to another cult, another religion. The oldest Christian gravestones have been preserved in the catacombs of Rome. As already emphasized, we find no symbols on them at first - only at the beginning and in the middle of the 2nd century does the anchor appear as the only symbol. Only then do the (symbol) cross and swastika appear, (cf. Pg. 33, Figs. 1-5). The Latin cross, on the other hand, does not appear at all in the catacombs of Rome[14]. Today, the cross is "the Christian symbol," but the passage in Minutius Felix shows that the (symbol) cross and the swastika were smuggled into Christianity only by weak, lukewarm Christians who could not completely free themselves from their accustomed ideas. Minutius Felix says (Octavius XXIX, 6): "For we do not worship crosses, nor do we desire to do so! You who hold wooden gods sacred, perhaps you worship wooden crosses as part of your gods. For even the standards themselves, the banners and flags of the camp, what are they but gilded and decorated crosses?"
Nevertheless, the cross became the main symbol of Christians, so even the Church was powerless against the tenacity of old traditions and sanctioned its use by offering a different explanation, namely that it was the instrument of execution on which Christ died (which in reality was probably T-shaped).

Throughout the Middle Ages, the swastika remained alive within the Church, in heraldic art and in objects from the field of folklore. However, it sank into insignificance and continued to exist only in secret. As mentioned at the beginning, Turnvater Jahn was its reviver, and in a deliberately German sense he wrote the four (symbol) of "fresh, pious, happy, free" in the form of a swastika. The Jahn tradition was then continued by the German Gymnastics Federation, and when a German youth movement arose in the Wandervogel in the last decade of the previous century, it turned back to the old German traditions. Thus, the Wandervogel greeting of the pre-war period was the old Gothic "Heil", and the swastika also became a meaningful symbol for the Wandervogel associations. For them, it was meant to be a symbol of the sun and the vitality of life, reminding them to always live in harmony with nature and the forces of the people. Then came the war, during which the entire Wandervogel youth movement took up arms. A large number of those who survived the war joined the Freikorps, and continued to fight in the self-defense associations after 1918. This is how the swastika entered the political movement of the present day, as the self-defense associations used it as their battle symbol. Adolf Hitler elevated it to the symbol of the National Socialist movement in 1919, and it began its triumphant advance, becoming the emblem of the new Germany 14 years later and, by decree of Reich President von Hindenburg on March 3rd, 1933, the symbol of a united national Germany alongside the black, white, and red flag.

[14] The alleged finds are proven to be erroneous by Roller ("Les Katakombes de Rome" ("The Catacombs of Rome"), 1881 ff.).


Sonne
Wärme
Lebensspender
Lebensrad
Jahreslauf
Sonnenrad
Werden
Feuer
Sein
Lebensquell
Vergehen
Unendlichkeit
Schöpfung
Drehung (Rotation)
Kraftzusammenballung
(Kraftkonzentration)
viel Segen
Glück
Amulett
Mond
Stier
Stier
Hakenkreuz
Stiermensch
Labyrinth
Übermensch
Dämon
8gliedrig
(2 Menschen)
Gemeinschaft
Doppelwesen
Schöpfung
Reibung
Bewegung
werdender Mensch
lebendiger Mensch
Vollendung
Wiedergeburt
Unendlichkeit

## The Swastika In Our Time

**Fig 1. Finnish aircraft squadron (photo taken in 1933). Thanks to the German Baltic fighters, the swastika, which had been native to Finland since ancient times, regained its prominence in the Finnish War of Independence, becoming the insignia of the Finnish women's military unit, the 'Lottas'.**

**Fig 2. From the Chinese-Japanese theater of war in 1933. Japanese staff with the swastika as staff flag, probably also meant as a symbol of salvation and good fortune here.**

**Fig 3. Motorized English artillery bears the swastika as a symbol of good luck. Photo taken in Aldershot in 1933. The swastika is not unknown in the US Army either; it was the insignia of the 45th Division during the [First] World War.**

**Fig 4. "Vote for independence." Swastika-shaped poster in Catalonia (Spain). Here, it has ethnic significance, because unlike the rest of the Spanish people, the Catalans are descendants of the ancient Ligurians, who have preserved their unique identity. The man pictured here is playing [basque] pelota[15].**

**Fig 5. 250-ruble note issued by the Kerensky government. The front bears the swastika beneath the Russian double-headed eagle, and the back bears the large denomination 250.**

[15] Generic term for "ball game" in multiple European and South American countries.

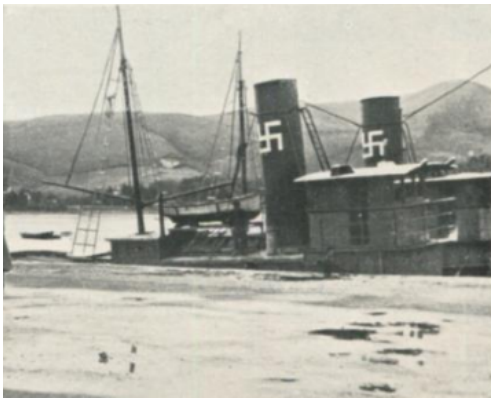


**Fig 6. Swastika used as a shipping company emblem. The steamers display it on their funnels. Bilbao (Spain).**

**Fig 7. Swastika on the stahlhelm of Hermann Göring in 1923, the current Prime Minister of Prussia.**

**Fig 8. Memorial to those who fell (November 11th, 1923) in the struggle for the Third Reich. Feldherrnhalle, Munich.**

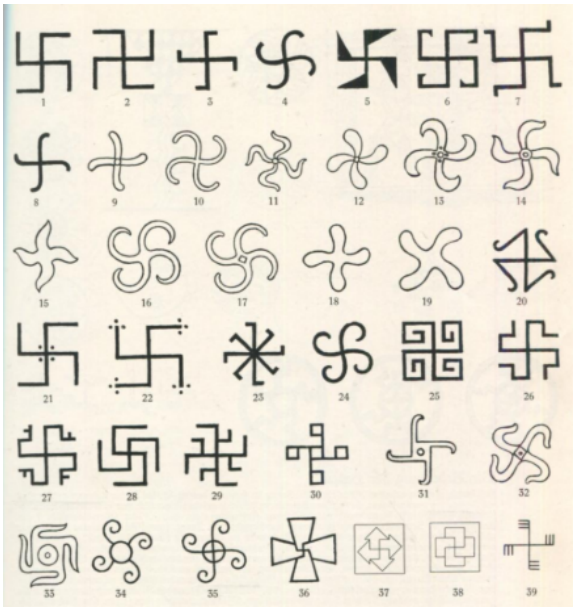
**Fig 9. The flag of the Roßbach Free Corps. The Roßbach Free Corps was one of the first volunteer formations in 1919.**

**Fig 10. Swastika as a gable decoration, on a house from a hundred years ago. At the time of gymnastics pioneer Jahn, German prehistory research experienced its first heyday. At that time, a particularly large number of burial grounds from the period 100-400 AD were excavated, and many urns with the swastika were found. Jahn therefore adopted the swastika as a symbol of "fresh, pious, happy, free" and wrote it in the form of a swastika; it was only later that it was changed to the form we know today under liberal pressure. Jahn lived for a long time in Freyburg a.d. Unstrut, close to Kösen, confirming that this swastika can be traced back to Jahn's influence.**

**Fig 11. Letterhead of the German Gymnastics Federation. The German Gymnastics Federation deliberately drew on Jahn's ideas, but in 1889 it was expelled from the German Gymnastics Association because of their Aryan clause. The spelling of "frisch, fromm, froh, frei" (fresh, pious, happy, free) as a double swastika was introduced in the German Gymnastics Federation in 1907.**

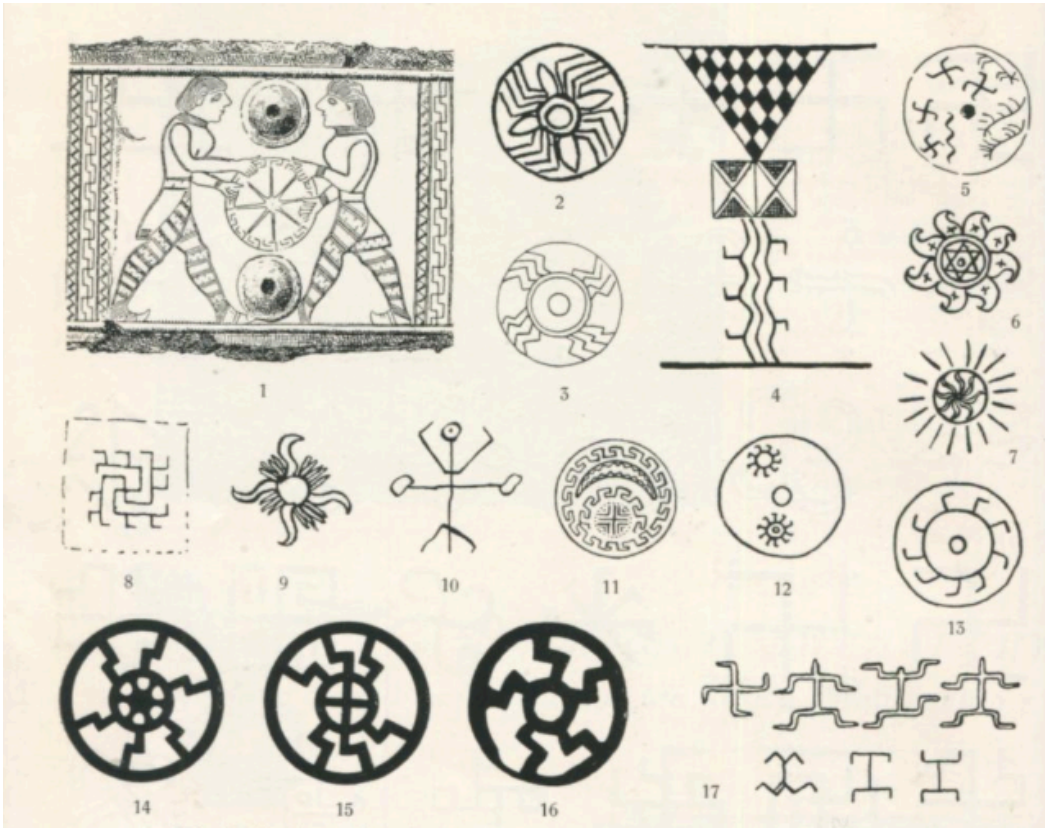
**Fig 12. The swastika in the Wandervogel. AWD, Oranienburg-Vorstadt local group. At the turn of the century, the Wandervogel, the German youth movement of the pre-war period, adopted the swastika as a symbol of renewal and nationalism from gymnastics pioneer Jahn.**

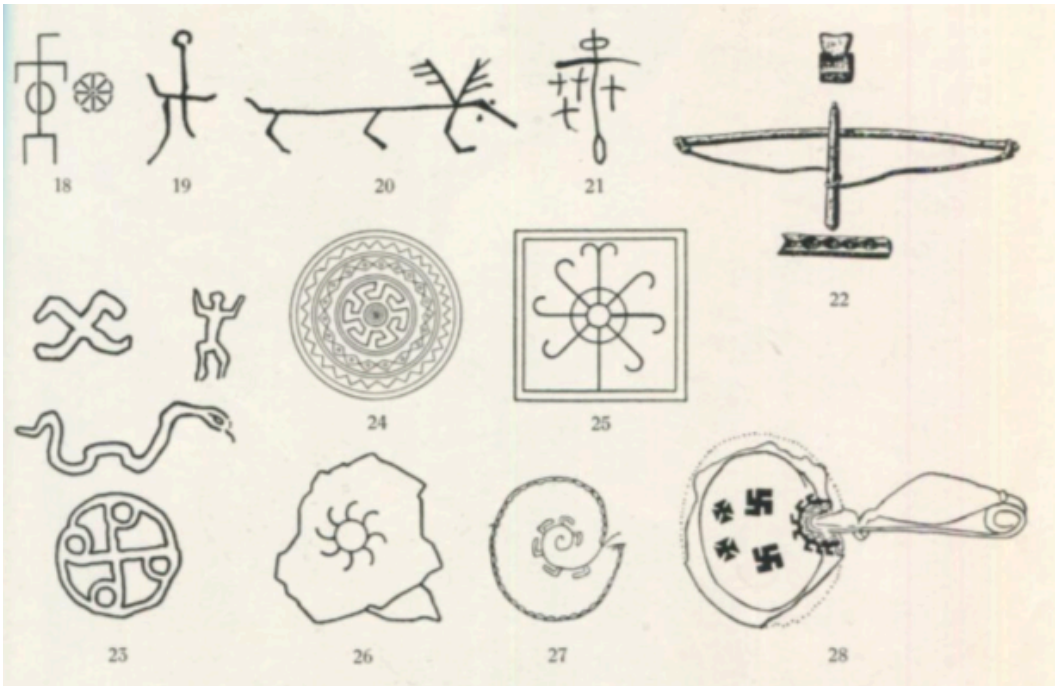
**Overview of Swastika Shapes**



**Figs 1, 2. Main form found in Northern Europe, Asia, and America. Figs 3, 4. Mostly found on sculptures. Fig 5. The so-called "paw cross" (Croix Patté). Fig 6. Scattered in northern and southern Europe. Fig 7. Particular to ancient Italy, and later in India, Central Europe, and Scandinavia. Figs 8, 9. On British and northern Greek coins. Figs 10-15. Celtic coins (3rd–1st century BC). Figs 16, 17. From Germanic cast hanging vessels from the Bronze Age. Figs 18, 19. On rocks in Sweden (questionable whether Bronze Age). Fig 20. Mark Brandenburg, southern Russia. Figs 21, 22. Northern Europe (1st–4th century AD) Fig 23. Aegean (Pelasgian), double swastika. Figs 24, 25. Southern Italy, Aegean Sea. Figs 26, 27, 28. Mainly Etruscan. Figs 29-33. Celtic, Anglo-Saxon (Britain). Figs 34, 35. France (Celtic). Figs 36, 37, 38. North Germanic. Mainly runestones. Fig 39. Transylvania (Neolithic).**

**The Significance of the Hooks**



Throughout most of the Middle Ages, the sun was depicted in forms with hook-like rays illustrating its movement; stylistically speaking, the swastika is probably just an abstract form of this already more naturalistic representation. We see Fig. 7 as an example of such a representation of the sun (Banquet of the Duke of Berry, French miniature, 14th century), or Fig. 9, a sun from a church in Schulpforta near Naumburg (Baroque, 17th century), or Fig. 6, an Indian representation of the sun. Fig. 2 is a reproduction of the sun from an Assyrian boundary stone from the 12th century BC; between the pointed oval arms of the sun wheel, four bundles of rays shoot out, resembling a swastika, a representation that echoes Fig. 3, a spindle whorl from the second city of Troy, where the four arms of the cross have become zigzag bundles that together form a swastika-like shape; Figs. 14-16 show the same type of representation, with the four-spoked and six-spoked sun wheel surrounded by six and five zigzag hooks, respectively. Such a representation is only possible if the hooks themselves are intended to express movement or turning, and indeed, in Troy, where we have the most numerous finds of swastikas from such an early period (mid-3rd millennium), we see that the number of rays does not necessarily have to be four; similarly, in the sun wheel, where we find three, six, or eight spokes instead of four. (We find a very similar interpretation in Fig. 25, the magic symbol of the Batak.)

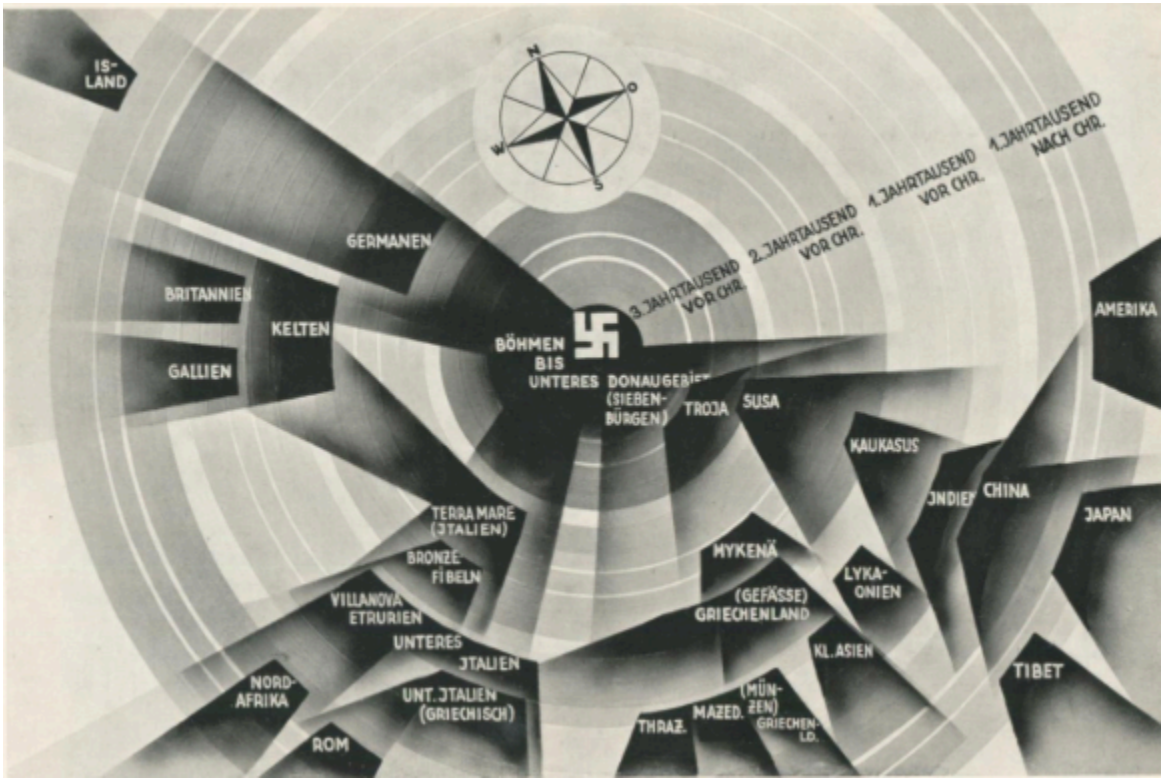
In the sun wheel, they run alongside the number of animals, and this seems to have been the case with the swastika as well. That the angled hook strokes signify movement is still evident in more recent depictions, such as Fig. 4, a Dasen image of the geometric style (1100-800 BC). The triangle with a checkerboard pattern at the top represents the world mountain, the middle part represents the eastern and western mountains between which the sun rises and sets, and below that is the world stream; hooks are placed on the world stream to indicate the direction of the waves' movement. The same is shown in Fig. 27, the plate of a garment (1200 BC), whose spiral in the middle is provided with hooks to indicate rotation and turning. In the brooch depicted in Fig. 28, swastikas and crosses indicate that the hooks on the semicircle formed by the bow are meant to symbolize the sun disc and its movement. In the same way, we see the rotation indicated on the Trojan whorls, Figs. 12 and 13, here as a sun image with many hooks, while on the fragment of the Mycenaean vase (Fig. 26) and the sun disc image from Tiryns (Fig. 24) we see eight and six hooks. The two miners (Hallstatt sword disc, around 700 BC) in Fig. 1, who turn the eight-rayed sun disc in a solemn ritual, are flanked on the right and left by swastika stripes; the sun disc itself bears twisted hooks on the right and left edges, which here merge with the sun wheel with the turning hooks, as can also be seen in Fig. 11, which comes from Central Etruria (Italy) from around 800 BC. In the circular disc, an equal-armed cross surrounded by hooks is drawn at the bottom, and above it is the moon, all surrounded again by a line of hooks.

Looking at the hooks, the question arises as to why a hook can indicate movement. In the tripods on page 50, we see that the hooks are sometimes still formed in the shape of human legs; the hooks therefore represent limbs in motion, and indeed, we need only look at the art of the 3rd millennium BC to find that humans are depicted not only in cross form, but also in a form very similar to the swastika, as are animals, whose legs are often simply hooks. Typical examples are the spindle whorl in Fig. 5, the human figure in Fig. 19, and the deer in Fig. 20, which also come from Trojan spindle whorls (11th city). Fig. 18 shows a human figure drawn in the shape of a cross (Italy, early Iron Age). In Fig. 21, the figure corresponds strikingly to the human figures drawn on the door of the house on Pg. 70, Fig. 8. Fig. 18 is Hittite, while in Fig. 10 from Troy, the human figure drawn inside the cross also has hooks as moving limbs. The

variety in the use of hooks, even in the depictions of toads, is shown in Fig. 17, the upper row of which comes from a shard from Rome and the lower row from Tordos.

It should therefore be clear that prehistoric humans understood the hooks of the swastika as symbols of movement, as turning hooks. In light of the above, it is entirely understandable that the hooks of the swastika are often reinforced with additional hooks, as in Fig. 8 from Thorsberg, Schleswig, 4th century AD. Fig. 22 shows an Eskimo fire drill to give an idea of what such instruments looked like - the bow is fiddled back and forth and, by the rotating friction at the lower end of the wood, tinder is ignited by pressing down on the handle at the top. (See pages 4 and 5.)
Fig. 23, rock drawing from Tunis (Stone Age). Herman Wirth takes this form of the sun wheel as the starting point for his explanatory theory. (See page 9.)

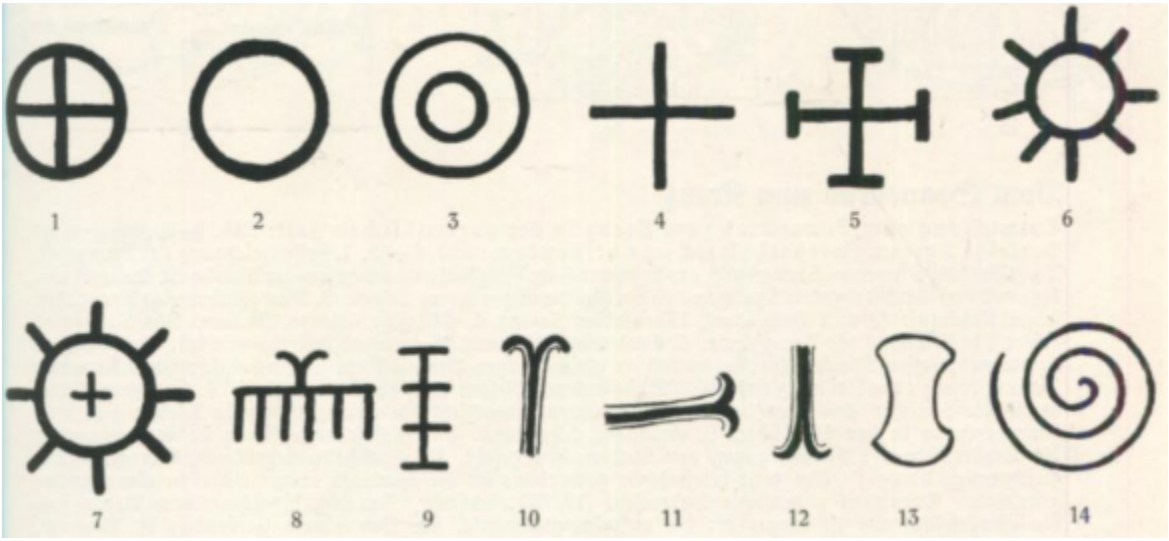
## 5,000 Years of the Swastika




The timeline illustrates the spread of the swastika from its place of origin in the center over the course of thousands of years. The time is indicated in the individual rings and can be read off.

## Geographical Distribution of the Swastika

**Symbols from the Neolithic Period, in the Nordic Cultural Sphere**




**Sun wheel, circular disc, concentric circles, cross, post cross, cogwheel, rayed cross, comb symbol, staff with crossbars, intertwined symbols, double axe, spiral.**

## From the Sun Wheel to the Cross

**Development from the sun wheel to the cross in pre-Christian times: Figs. 1-3.**
**The same process is repeated in Christianity: Figs. 4-12.**

**Fig 1. Rock drawing from the Bronze Age, Backa Brastad, Sweden. Sun god holding the sun wheel in a ring; next to him the moon god.**

**Fig 2. Serrated wheel with free spokes forming an equal-armed cross.**

**Fig 3. The equal-armed cross without any wheel rim. (2 and 3 Helmsdorf, Mansfelder Seekr.)**

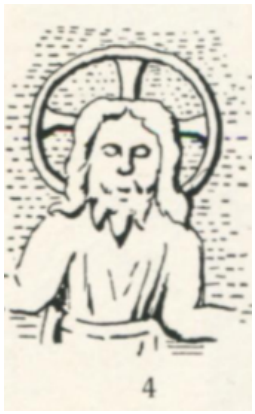



**Fig 4. Oil bottle, Monza, Italy. The sun wheel behind Christ's head as a cross halo.**

**Fig 5. Tombstone, Denmark. Sun wheel on a staff.**

**Fig 6. Sweden. Sun wheel with free-standing spokes forming an equal-armed cross.**

**Fig 7. Ivory carving, Ravenna, Italy. Cross without wheel rim on a staff and clearly separated from it.**

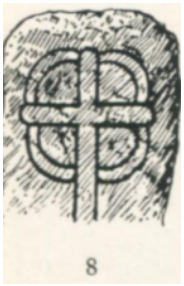



**Fig 8. Tombstone, Denmark. The spokes have grown beyond the wheel rim, and the downward-pointing spoke merges into the staff without interruption.**

**Fig 9. Tombstone, Scotland. The equal-armed cross is still recognizable, with the downward-pointing spoke still set off against the staff.**

**Fig 10. Tombstone, Scotland. The Greek cross with equal arms has become a Latin cross here; the wheel rim, which has become a subordinate ornament, is a reminder of its origin.**

**Fig 11. St. Mark's Basilica, Venice. The spokes of the wheel are free, the downward-pointing one is longer than the upward-pointing one.**

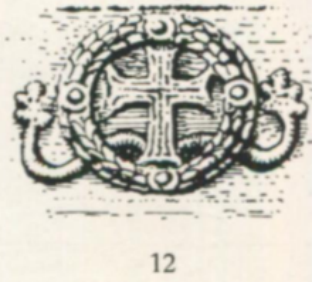



**Fig 12. From a sarcophagus in Ravenna. Latin cross in a wheel rim that has become a wreath of leaves.**

**Fig 13. Carved stone. The lamb bears a T-shaped cross, the shape of the actual cross. The upper part of the anchor shows that the instrument of execution, the "crux," could be described as anchor-shaped.**

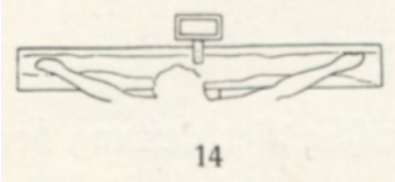



**Fig 14. Painting by Berthel Bruyn. Upper part of the cross. The tablet with the inscription sits on a narrow strip that is fastened with two nails - this shows that the memory of what the cross actually looked like had not yet faded.**

**Fig 15. Mithras stone from Schwarzerden, with the sun on the left and the moon as a bull's head on the right.**

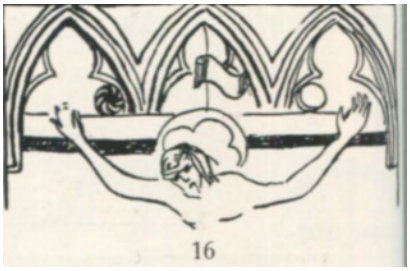



**Fig 16. Christian diptych (two-part writing tablet with the sun on the left and the moon on the right above the cross holders).**

## Christianity

The earliest development of Christian symbolism can best be traced in the catacombs of Rome, where the use of symbols on tombstones first appeared. Soon after the anchor, which was present in the early and middle 2nd century AD, the swastika appeared, but anchors, doves with branches, the good shepherd, and the Christ monogram (which, however, is also of pagan origin and was only later formed into the Christ monogram) continued to predominate by far. The uniform cross and the T-shaped true cross appear less frequently, as does the swastika.

**Figs. 1, 3, and 5 are examples of such gravestones with swastikas from the 3rd and 4th centuries. The gravestone in Fig. 5 bears the sun wheel next to the swastika.**

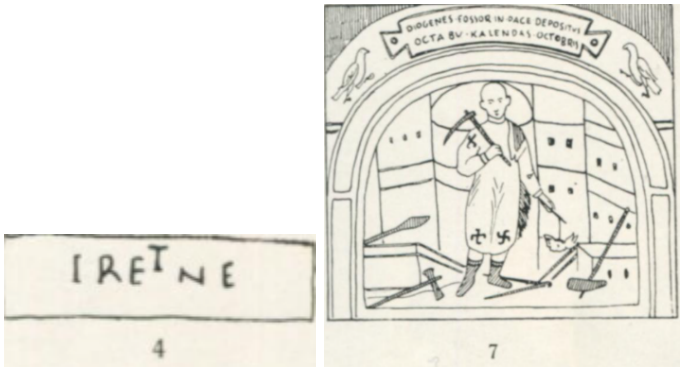
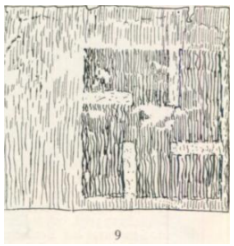
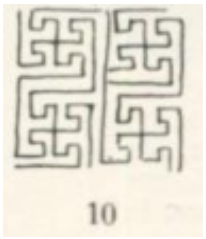



**Fig. 4 is an example of a grave slab with a T-shaped cross. It is inserted into the name "Trene," while Fig. 2 is the oldest catacomb gravestone with an equal-armed cross. The swastika also appears on the clothing of gravediggers and other sacred persons, Fig. 7.**

**We encounter the swastika quite often in Christian churches, not only in the West but also in the East. We also find it in the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, Fig. 45 (see Pg. 46). Fig. 8 comes from the Church of St. Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, 6th century - the door bears a large Latin cross in the center and two sun wheels on its crossbar at the top. Seven swastikas are grouped around the outside.**





**The swastika has also been handed down from the Christian southeast. For example, a piece of fabric with a swastika from the 2nd century was found in the cemetery of Achnim Panopolis, Egypt, Fig. 9. Fig. 10 belongs to the Coptic period (found in Bawit), where it appears very frequently in frescoes from the 5th to 7th centuries. Fig. 6 comes from Jerusalem, from the so-called Stables of Solomon.**

*

## The Sun Wheel in Folk Tradition

**Fig 11. Book cover of a book about polar expeditions, featuring the midnight sun. The illustration shows that the perception of the sun as a sun wheel is based on observations of the sun at different latitudes; thus, after 1100, the Icelandic astronomer "Stern-Oddi" always refers to the sun as the "wheel of the sun."**

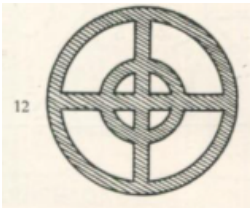



**Fig 12. Rock carving from Sweden. Sun wheel is very similar to Fig. 1.**

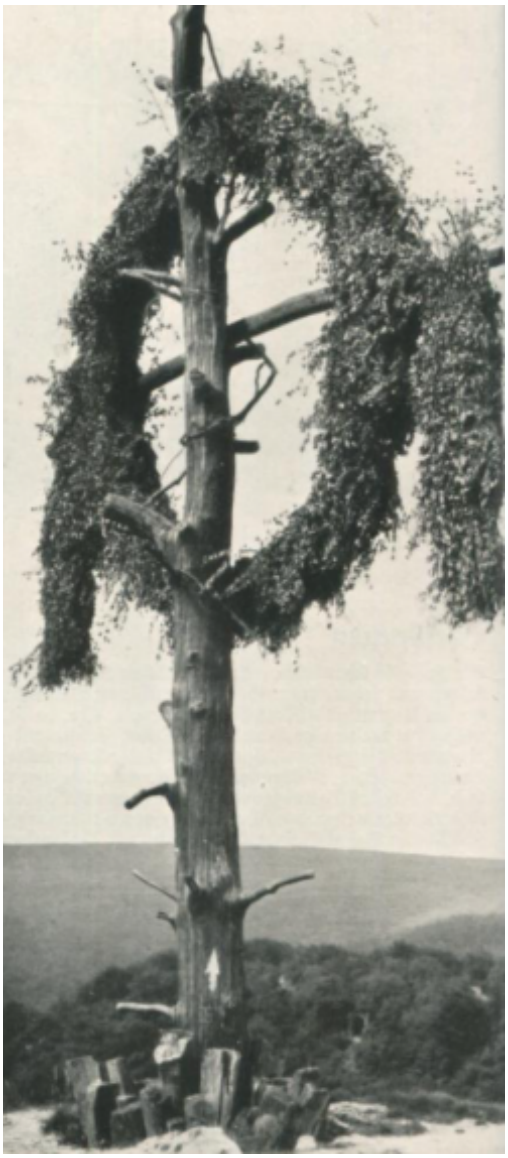
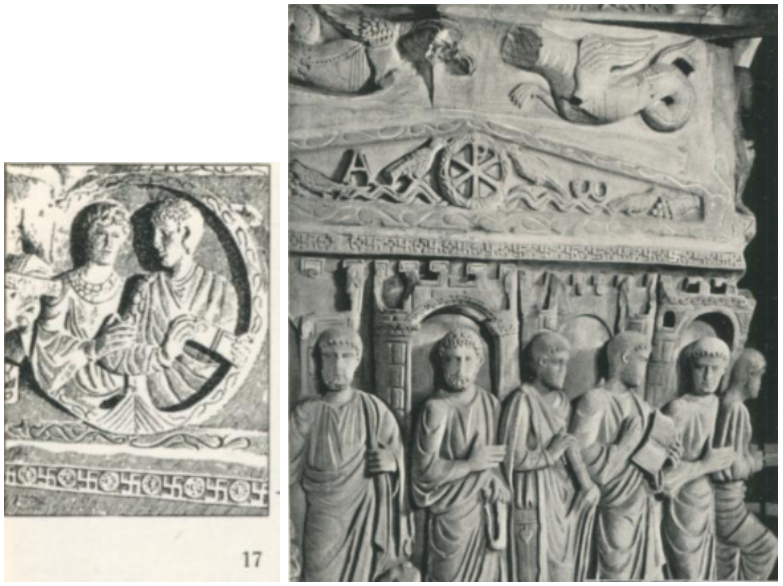


**Fig 13. The sun wheel in folk tradition: the quest in Questenberg (southern Harz Mountains). Every year on Whit Monday, a large wreath made of green birch branches is hung on a sturdy oak trunk, visible from afar.**

**Figs 14, 15. Easter custom in Lüdge, Westphalia, based on the folk song: "St. Johannes die Sonne wendt, Feuerrad bergunter rennt", ("St. John turns the sun, the fire wheel runs downhill.") A "sun wheel" with straw stuffed between its spokes is set alight (an ancient fertility charm) and rolled downhill.**

**Fig 16. On the same day, children eat Easter cookies shaped like sun wheels.**

*




**Tomb of the Vandal Stilicho, 408 A.D., in the Church of St. Ambrose, Milan. He was murdered on the orders of the Emperor of Rome, even though he saved Rome from the Goths. His sarcophagus is decorated with a border of sun wheels and swastikas. 17. Stilicho with his wife. 18. The narrow side of the sarcophagus. In the pediment is the six-spoked sun wheel reinterpreted as the monogram of Christ.**

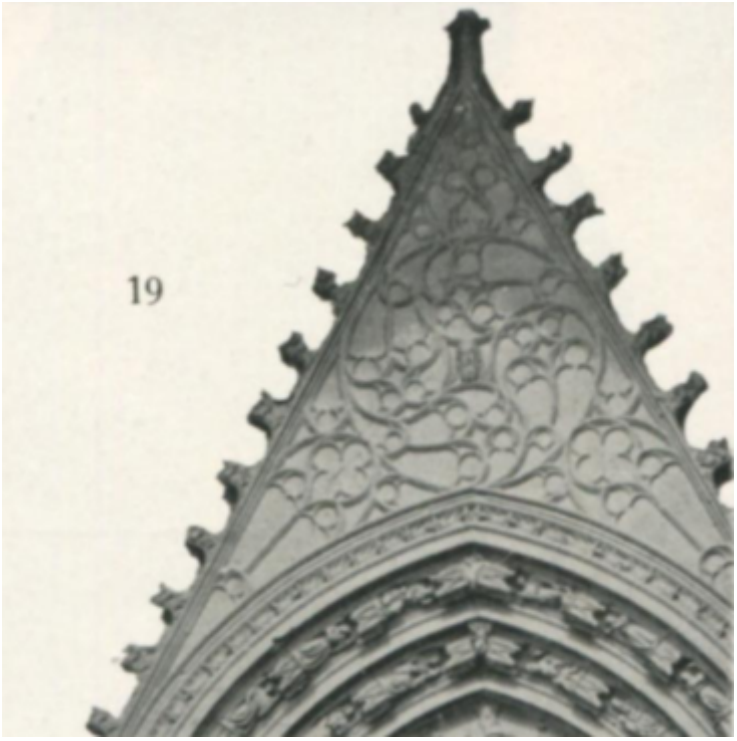



**Fig 19. Swastika above the church door of Mallorca Cathedral in Gothic ornamentation.**

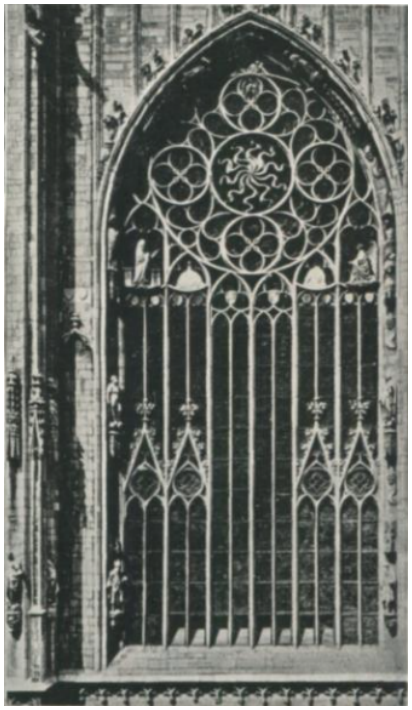
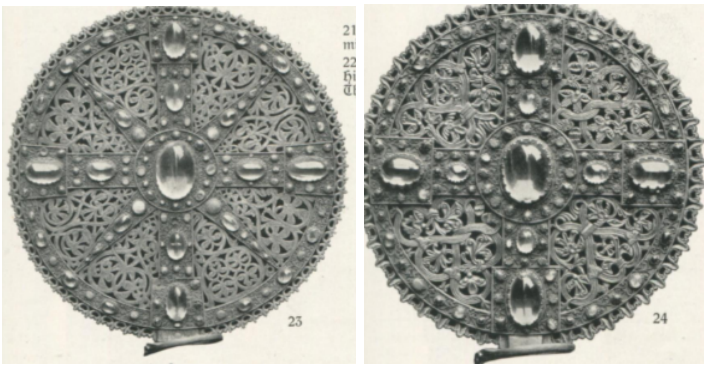


**Fig 20. Sun wheel on Milan Cathedral. The middle circle of the wheel is filled with a clearly flaming sun.**

**Fig 21. "Frauenkirche" in Tübingen, equidistant sun circles with raised hands.**

**Fig 22. From the Church of Peter and Paul in Hirsau. The god of the sky, probably Thor, judging by the goat on the left, with the sun wheel to his right.**



**Figs 23, 24. Sun wheels (processional discs), eight-spoked at the top and four-spoked at the bottom, from the Hildesheim Cathedral treasury.**

**Fig 25. Decorative disc from Hierstein near Mainz (Merovingian). Two human figures in a circle (wheel).**

**Fig 26. "The God in the Wheel" from St. George's Collegiate Church, Tübingen. A Latin antiphon reports: "The voice of his thunder, the God in the wheel, is John the Evangelist, proclaiming the light from heaven through the cycle of the universe" (according to Franz, Kirchliche Benediktionen ("*Ecclesiastical Benedictions*"), 1/317).**

**Fig 27. Christ and the twelve apostles. Ivory book cover from the 9th century. In the center, the swastika is formed by four streams of water as a source of life.**

**Fig 28. Relief above the door of the church in Oberröblingen (after 1100). On the far right is the hand of God, in the center is Christ as a goat (not a lamb – Thor!) with the equal-armed cross on the staff, next to it the swastika in a rounded form. On the far left is the so-called Alben cross, which corresponds to the Drudenfuß. The Alben cross bears the name cross in the sense of a sign of salvation; it resembles the fire rose or medlar in shape.**

**Fig 29. The Hunger Cloth of Heiligengrabe (Mark Brandenburg). This cloth, which is over 500 years old, is rich in symbols. God the Father bears the swastika next to the cross. Our image shows the risen Christ with a large swastika on his chest with an animal head, reminiscent of the animal ornamentation of the 7th-9th centuries.**

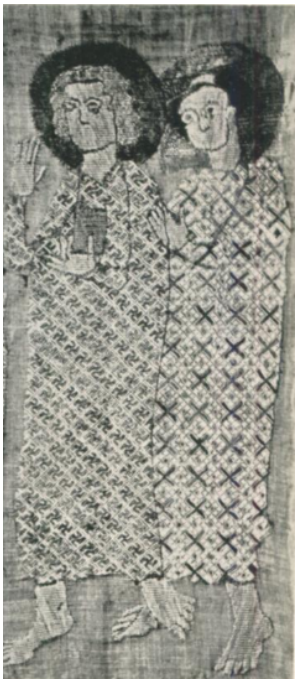


**Fig 30. Another scene from the Lenten veil. Christ at his baptism. His clothes are covered with swastikas.**

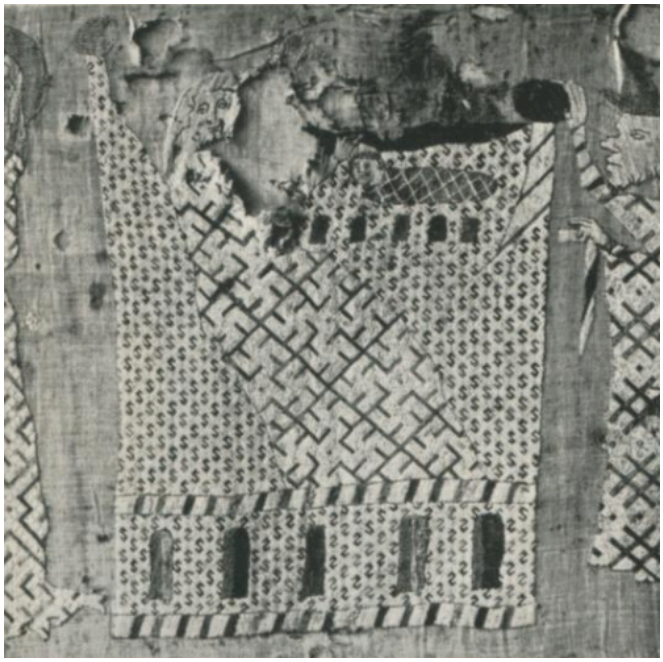


**Fig 31. Part of the hunger cloth from Heiligen Grabe. Mary with the Christ Child in swaddling clothes; Mary's clothing covered with swastikas.**

**Fig 32. The Mass of St. Gregory from St. Mary's Church in Lübeck, 16th century. The altar boy on the far left next to the altar is wearing yellow swastikas on a red background.**

**Fig 33. Bronze tomb of Bishop Bocholt, 1341 AD, Lübeck. The bishop's stole is decorated with swastikas.**

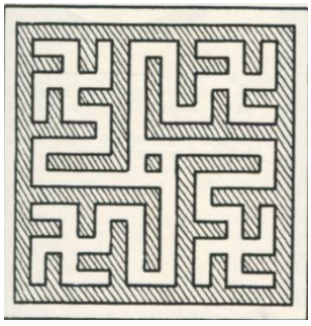


**Fig 34. The distinctive symbol motif consists of four swastikas grouped around an equal-armed cross, with which they are connected. This symbol arrangement can already be found in pagan times, cf. Figs. 37, 12, 48, 11, etc.**

**Fig 35. “Fillgrankasten” from the Trier Cathedral treasury. Five circles form a cross, with the four small ones bearing the swastika woven into a “Solomon's knot.” The circular disc in the center is filled with woven ornamentation.**

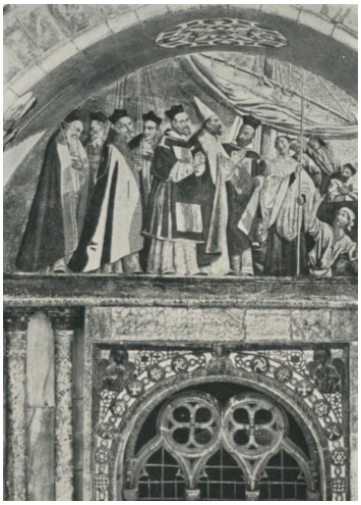
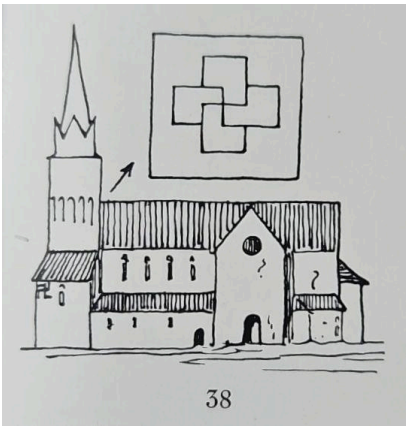
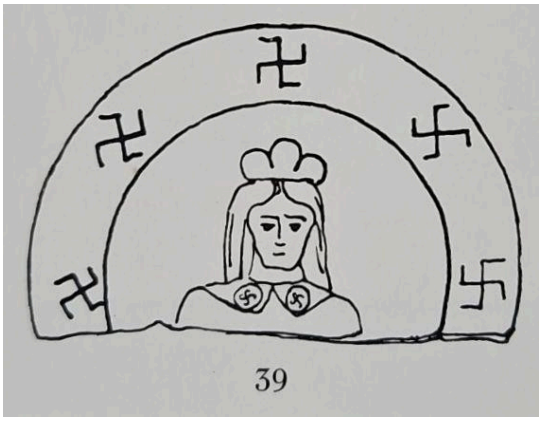


**Fig 36. St. Mark's Church, Denedig. The swastika on the arched frieze of the window, together with crosses, wheel crosses, and six-pointed stars.**

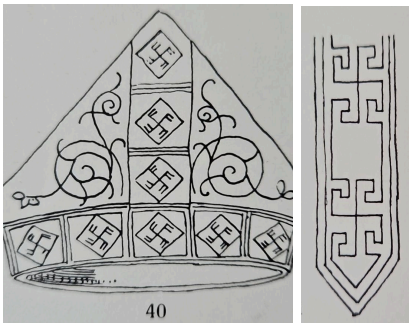
**Fig 37. From the cathedral treasury in Hildesheim. Irish box. The lid bears a swastika woven from animal heads, the inner part of which forms a sun wheel.**



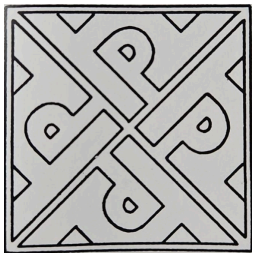

**The cathedral of Crusvica has a swastika carved in granite on its outer wall (12th century), where it is merged with an equal-armed cross to form a symbol, Fig. 38.**



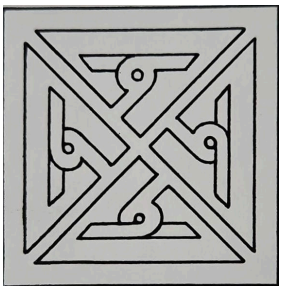

**A shroud, Fig. 39, which dates from the 14th century, is located in the Greek Catholic monastery at Putna in Bukovina.**



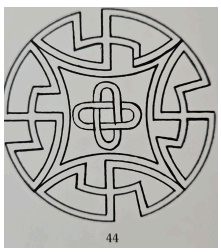

**The tiara of St. Gaudentius (Fig. 40) dates from the 8th century, while the stole of St. Digilius, Bishop of Mainz (Fig. 41), dates from the 10th century. The swastika also appears on medieval coins; strikingly, these are all coins belonging to ecclesiastical principalities. This is the case on coins from the dioceses of Mainz and Halberstadt, as well as from Bishop Heinrich of Erfurt (1140 to 1150). Illustration in v. Posern-Klett, Sachsens Münzen. 1846.**
**There are also pieces with swastikas among the bracteates found in Paußnitz near Strehla. Illustration in Arch. f. Brakteatenkunde, vol. 4.**

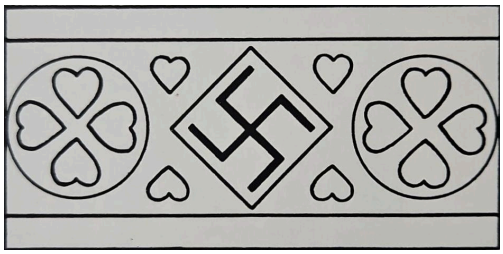


**The Gospel Book of Toulouse from the 8th century contains a particularly meaningful swastika. Its hooks each end in a P, i.e. a Greek R, so that the diagonal crossbars of the swastika can be read as a Greek X, thus forming the fourfold monogram of Christ XP, Fig. 42.**



**The Gospel Book of St. Sernin also contains this quadruple monogram, except that the Greek P ends in flourishes, giving the whole arrangement the character of a cross similar to our iron cross, Fig. 43.**



**In the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, the swastika stands in the center of sun wheels, the space between the spokes of which has been transformed into hearts, flanked by four of them, Fig. 45. Also Byzantine is the sun wheel from Thessaloniki, which encloses swastikas in a quadruple arrangement and in whose center stands the swastika transformed into the so-called Solomon's knot, Fig. 44.**

In the Romanesque and Gothic styles, plant ornaments are often carved into stone. As our three examples show, they very often feature swastikas that have been redesigned as plant ornaments, although their symbolic character is unmistakable.

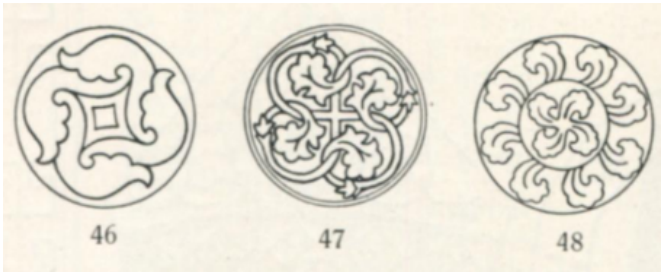
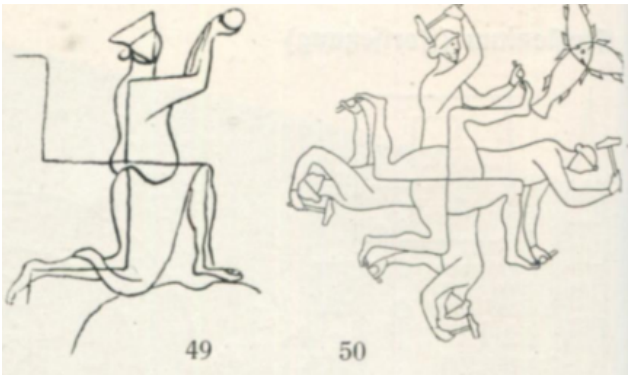


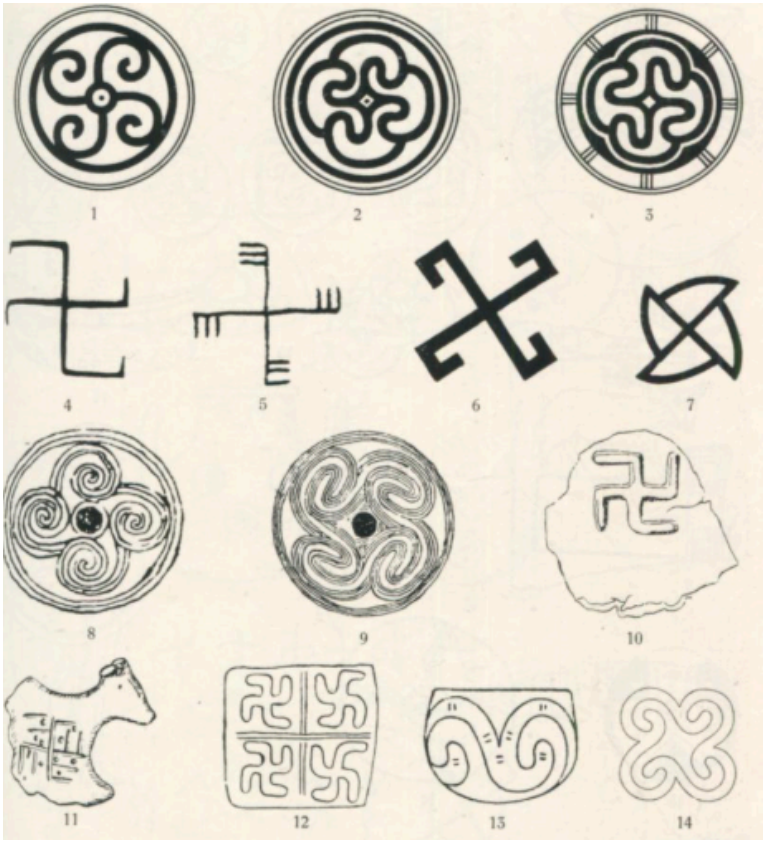

**Fig 46. Romanesque, Heiligenkreuz.**
**Fig 47. Southwell Church in Nottinghamshire.**
**Fig 48. St. Sebald's Church in Nuremberg.**




**Figs 49 and 50. From the sketchbook of Dillard de Honnecourt (beginning of the 13th century). Fig. 49 also shows that even in this late period, the idea of the human figure had not yet been lost in the swastika.**

**Fig 51. Altar cloth from the first half of the 14th century from the Church of Mary on the Meadow in Soest. The lower edge shows Christ, pursued by hunters, leaping into Mary's lap in the mystical form of a unicorn. This scene shows that the figures in the center also have symbolic meaning. Fifteen swastikas are arranged around the central wheel cross figure.**

## Linear Pottery Culture




The oldest swastikas were found within the Linear Pottery culture of the Late Stone Age, in Bohemia and Transylvania, partly carved and partly painted on vessels.
Figs. 4 and 5 are from Tordos, Transylvania; Figs. 6 and 7 are from Bohemia. That these are indeed meant to be symbolic swastikas is shown in Fig. 5, which depicts a fusion of the swastika with the comb symbol, cf. Troy, Pg. 53, Fig. 26. Similarly, Fig. 6 from Herbitz near Aussig shows an engraved mark on the base of a spherical vessel from the early Stroke-Ornamented Ware culture, corresponding to an engraved feather cross on the inside.

Figs. 1-3 and 8-9 belong to the painted pottery of Tripoli; Figs. 10-12 are slightly younger finds from Hungary. The connection between the swastika and the animal characterizes it as a symbol of life.

The band ceramic culture of the 3rd millennium extended as far as central Germany, and here, as in the rest of its territory, we often find vessels decorated with volute bands, which in the overall composition frequently form spiral crosses, but these are to be regarded as purely decorative; they show, however, how the motif arose spontaneously in vessel decoration. Some researchers believe that without the existence of such decorative motifs in the technique of vessel decoration (and also in weaving), the emergence of the swastika would not have been possible, although the leap to symbolism remains unexplained. Figs. 13, 14.

## Tripod

The tripod as a recognized symbol of the sun provides an opportunity to explain the meaning of the hooks in the swastika, as the hooks are often depicted as natural legs.

**Fig. 1 Painted Hallstatt vessel from Tschantz (Silesia). The tripod as a sun symbol in a circle, with forked signs in the three corners on the right and left, whose symbolic meaning is discussed on Page 3.**

**Fig. 2. Aspendos coin (6th-5th century BC). The sun wheel is drawn in the pivot point.**

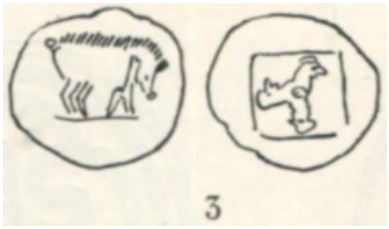



**Fig. 3 Lycian coin with sun bar and tripod made of rooster heads.**

**Fig. 4 Persepolis, 3rd century BC. Next to the fire altar is the rooster sun bird, sacred to Ormudz.**

**Fig. 5 Coin from Syracuse with winged tripod.**

**Fig. 6 Aspendos coin. Rooster next to tripod.**

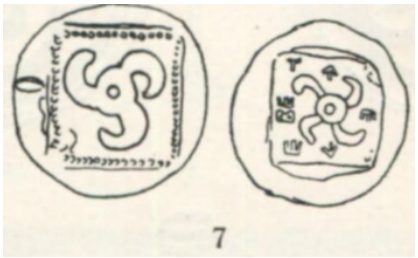



**Fig. 7 Three- and four-legged figures from 5th-century coins from Asia Minor.**

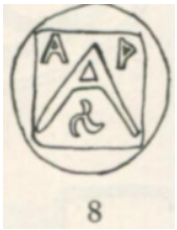



**Fig. 8 Coin from Argos. Tripod made of three crescent moons.**

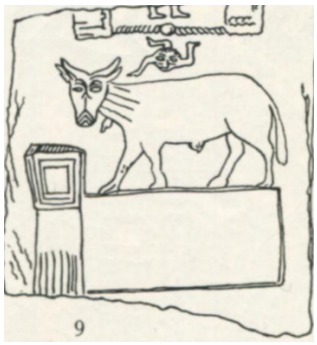



**Fig. 9 Relief from Bedjae, Tunis, with Phoenician inscription: "Consecrated to Baal, the Lord, the eternal Sun King, who heard the plea of Hicmathos and his servant Hicembal, the governor."**

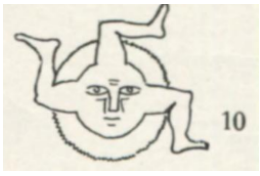



**Fig. 10 From a Celtiberian coin.**

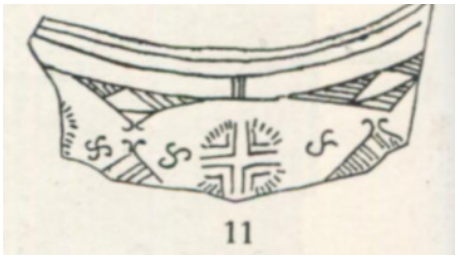


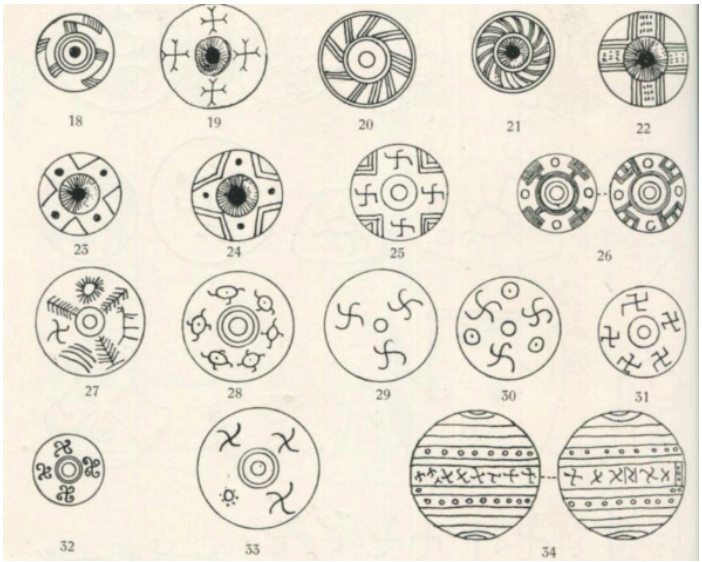

**Fig. 11 Gorszenice. Painted pottery from the Hallstatt period. Cross with halo next to a tripod and swastika.**

**Fig. 12 "Sicilia." Bust from the Vatican.**

**Figs. 13 and 14 Wohlau, Silesia, and Lohse near Wohlau. Painted pottery from the Hallstatt period. Another thing about Fig. 14 - here the tripod stands surrounded by a circle at the intersection of an equilateral cross made of bent rays, with four tripods in the corners, an arrangement similar to that found in the swastika on Pg. 49, Fig. 12.**

**Fig. 15 Warrior with shield; from a Greek bowl from the 5th century BC.**

**Troy**



In the second city of Troy, the swastika appears en masse; meanwhile, it was found only once in the lowest layer, the first city, on a shard of pottery. However, Schliemann (the excavator) states (Ilios, 1881, p. 393) that, based on the clay and technique used, the shard does not originate from the first city, but must have somehow found its way into the lower layer during the excavation; Hubert Schmidt nevertheless incorrectly places the shard in the first city in the catalog of the Schliemann Collection (Leipzig 1902, p. 8, No. 227). If this piece were from the first city, it would be of the same age as the Danubian pieces (cf. page 11).

To give an idea of the numerous spindle whorls, a selection mainly from the second city (2600-1900 BC) is shown. Similar to Brenndorf in Transylvania, we find spindle whorls such as Fig. 26 with swastikas, which apparently represent a fusion with the comb pattern, an indication of mutual dependence; otherwise, Maltese crosses, tripods, crosses, sun swirls, and similar symbols alternate. Fig. 16 shows a fusion of the sun wheel and the swastika.

Von der Steinen (Balstian Festschrift 1896) attempted to explain the swastika as a flying stork based on the Trojan finds; he assumes this by noting that numerous animals are depicted on spindle whorls in Troy, Figs. 2, 3, 12, 14, 15, and because the swastika beams occur in all possible hook rotations against each other, Fig. 17. It cannot be concluded from this that swastikas are flying storks, since many other depictions on spindle whorls are by no means stylized animals. The “beaks” identified by von der Steinen are also not evidence, as they could easily have been caused by slipping when carving the hooks; these carvings are often very superficial, which can be easily verified by visual inspection. The swastika does not only occur in areas where storks breed, as our distribution map clearly shows. The fact that the swastika appears on the roofs of Italian houses is also irrelevant, as it also appears on their front doors. More for the sake of curiosity, it should be mentioned where this kind of interpretation can lead. Krause, Gleiwitz (Zeitschrift für Ethn. 1889) explained the swastika as a weaver and the comb patterns as looms. Moritz Hoernes sees in the swastika an abbreviated human figure (“Urgeschichte der bild”. “Kunst”, 2nd ed., Vienna 1915, p. 337 ff.), because he considers it necessary to presuppose some realistic object. As we saw on Pg 24, hooks signify movement, and human legs are often simply drawn in the shape of hooks. Fig. 13 depicts a mother goddess, as can be seen from the position of her arms, which is typical of the Greek archaic period.

The swastika is therefore a symbol of fertility and a symbol of life. The doubts expressed about its authenticity are not justified, as a comparison with Figs. 9-11 shows (see also Lichtenberg, Memmon V, p. 225). The swastika as a symbol of the sun and life force is therefore entirely understandable in this context. There is no need to assign any other meaning than its original one, as is already clear from Fig. 9, where the equal-armed cross is placed in the same position.

## Mycenae (Greece)

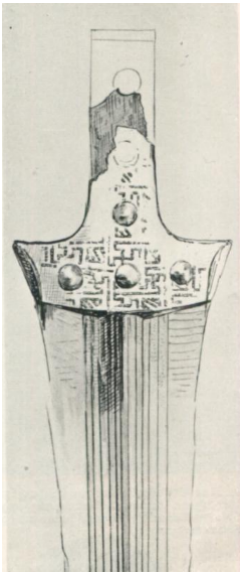


**Fig. 1 Mycenaean sword with swastikas on the hilt**

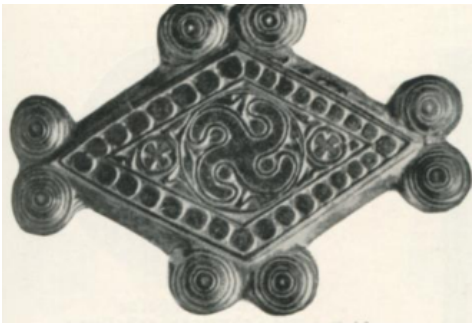


**Fig. 2 Fitting with swastika and wheel crest**

**Fig. 3 Wheel symbol made of gold sheet metal**

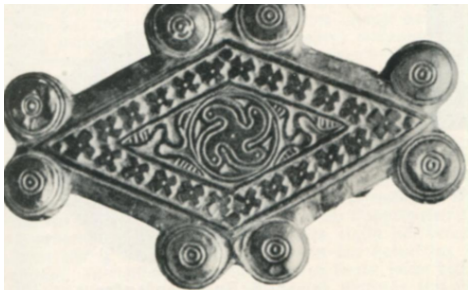


**Fig. 4 Gold sheet metal fitting with swastika, three legs, and border of crosses**

**Figs. 5, 6, 7, 8 Gold buttons**

**Fig. 9 A grave pillar from shaft graves. Chariot scene, above it spirals arranged in a swastika pattern; below it two circular discs with a three-part spiral arrangement.**

**Fig. 10 Tripod**

**Fig. 11 Gold disc with labyrinth depiction**

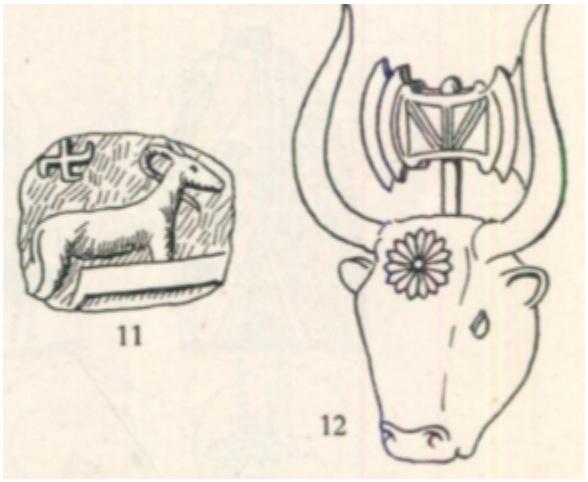
**Fig. 12 Wheel cross**

**Fig. 13 Spiral swastika**

**Fig. 14 Painted shard**

The hundreds of gold treasures from the shaft graves of Mycenae (16th century BC) feature numerous swastikas, mainly in a rounded form. The tripod is also frequently found on the artifacts, as are wheel crosses and crosses. In keeping with the close connection to Cretan culture, we also find some labyrinthine representations. All this shows that the swastika was not a decorative element, but a symbol, which is confirmed by its use on swords.
We present a limited selection of the numerous gold buttons in Figs. 5-8, as well as the fittings in Figs. 2 and 4, which show the swastika alongside the tripod, sun wheel, and cross.

## Crete




In Crete, we find numerous connections between the labyrinth and the swastika. Our knowledge of the labyrinth in southern Europe has only improved in recent times; during excavations in Samos, for example, it was discovered that a former labyrinth had been located beneath the temple complex.

The ancient Greek jug from Tragliatella (Fig. 1) bears a drawing depicting a labyrinth from which horsemen emerge to kidnap a woman. The inscription “Truja” is attached to the labyrinth, which means that we can also refer to the labyrinths in the south as Trojan castles. The Trojan castle is undoubtedly connected with the sun cult and the sun maiden, the legends of Helen and Brunhilde (this much is certain according to Ernst Krause, “Die Trojaburgen in Nordeuropa”, (“The Trojan Castles of Northern Europe”, 1893)). Fig. 2 is a child's drawing from Pompeii; next to the Trojan castle is written: labyrinthus hic habitat minotaurus (this is the labyrinth, here lives the Minotaur). This clearly attests to the connection between the Trojan castle and the Minotaur, and we understand once again why Cretan coins bear the Trojan castle on one side and the Minotaur on the other.

In Figs. 5 and 6, on the front of the coin, and in Fig. 8, on the back, the swastika in the outer outline is similar to the equal-armed cross, while the intertwined lines form a swastika. Figs. 3 and 4 show the sun and moon in the center of the labyrinth, thus again indicating the ancient connection. The Minotaur is the bull god, often depicted as a hermaphroditic human being with a bull's head. He is the animal demon, and the bull-man actually symbolizes a superhuman being. Perhaps his dual nature is meant to characterize him as a creator. From this perspective alone, a connection with the swastika becomes apparent, for the swastika as such is a source of life and a symbol of fertility. Such sacred bull head images have been found several times in Cretan-Mycenaean finds. Fig. 12 comes from the fourth shaft grave of Mycenae. The bull's head bears the sun rosette on its forehead and the sacred double axe between its horns. Fig. 7 is a swastika formed from double axes revolving around a sun rosette.

Fig. 9 depicts a bull's head like Fig. 12, but instead of the axe it bears a slanted cross between its horns. This brings to mind the passage in the Book of Ezekiel IX, 4-6, where the prophet consecrates man and beast “with the mark on their foreheads,” or the Roman writer Eusebius. However, the tau cross is not identical with the swastika; we find here only the same relationship that exists between the sun wheel and the swastika. This is important for the question of the swastika among the Phoenicians.

In light of the above, we can understand the swastika next to the horned animal in Fig. 11.

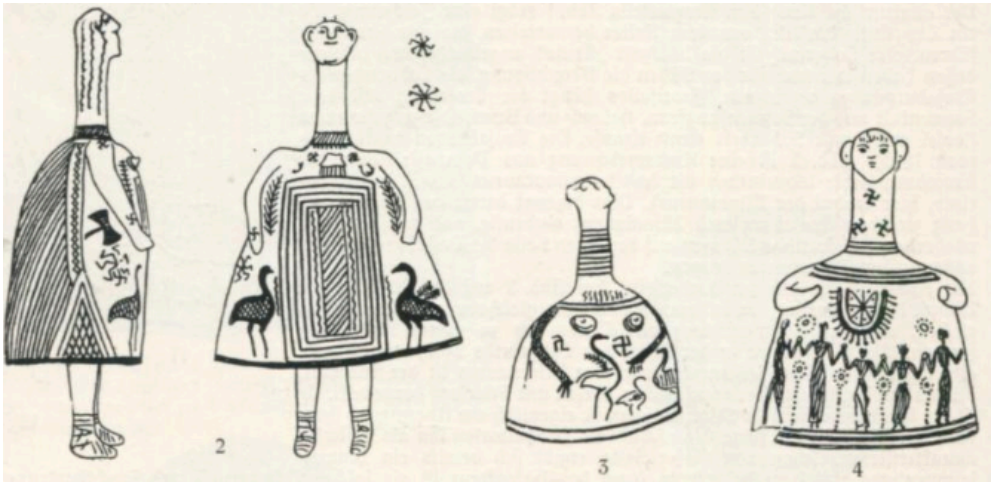
The fact that this idea can be traced across wide areas is evident from the Chinese image on Pg.103, Fig. 9, where a bull also bears the swastika on its forehead; we find the same thing reported from India. This clearly identifies the swastika as a symbol of life and power.

Fig. 10, from an Attic vase from the 6th century BC, depicts Theseus dragging the slain Minotaur out of the labyrinth. The edge of the wall is decorated with checkerboard patterns (for the meaning of these, see Pg. 24, Fig. 4), which are interrupted by swastikas.

## Greece

As a legacy of the Cretan-Mycenaean period, the Dipylon style (1100-900 BC, i.e. from the time when Greek civilization emerged) preserves the swastika.

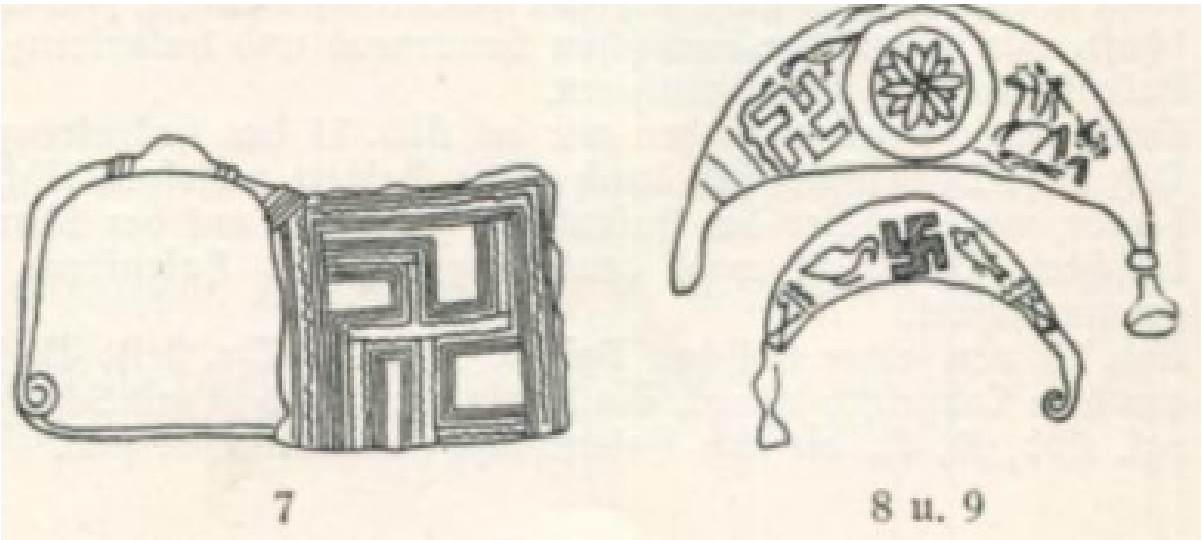
**Fig. 1 depicts a funeral procession. The deceased is carried on a horse-drawn cart in a solemn procession. Behind him are his relatives; to the right are warriors, and above and below are mourners. Above the horses, we see the left-facing swastika three times, and below the horses on the cart and below the swastikas is the sun bird. On the far left is a sun wheel image transformed into a six-pointed star.**



**The figures (in the geometric style) in Figs. 2, 3, and 4, which come from Boeotian graves, are unanimously regarded as fertility deities. Once again, we find the ancient symbols: the double axe, the comb pattern on the neck, star swirls with bent rays, swastikas, and swastikas formed from eight beams. The birds and concentric circles characterize these deities as beings associated with life.**

**Fig. 5 shows a funerary vessel in the geometric style.**

**Fig. 6 bears the swastika beneath the horses at the edge.**




**Figs. 7, 8, and 9 are clasps from garment pins.**

**The clay sarcophagus (Figs. 12-15) belongs to the transitional style of the 9th-8th century BC. Among its many symbols, the "winged mistress of life" is particularly striking, depicted here, as in the Mycenaean period, as a bird slayer. She develops into Artemis, to whom Figs. 10 and 11 refer in the same way. Both are once again identified as mistresses of life by the accompanying lion or the obedient wolves and peacocks. The fish in the middle of her robe and the bull's head and bull's leg emphasize her as a moon goddess.**

**As goddess of the hunt, Artemis also reveals herself as mistress of life, but in classical history she also has traits of a fertility goddess, so that we again see the swastika and the cross.**

**Fig. 16. The Corinthian coin with the winged sun horse, Pegasus, the ring staff, and the swastika on the reverse.**

**Fig. 17, also from a Corinthian coin.**

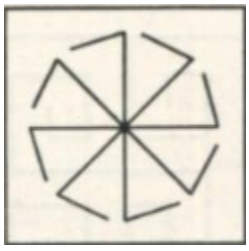


**Fig. 18, the double swastika, which occurs frequently in the Greek "Pelasgian" circle.**

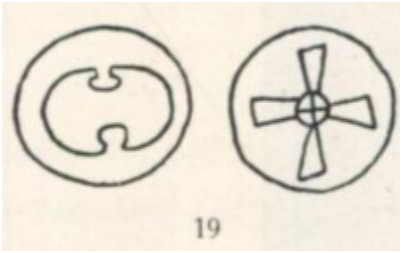



**Fig. 19. Boeotian coins, known as "dramna", with the sun wheel at the center of the swastika.**

**The discus throwers in Fig. 20 are jumping over a discus, on whose rotating disc sits the swastika, whose hooks in turn symbolize rotation; the discus itself is a sun disc.**

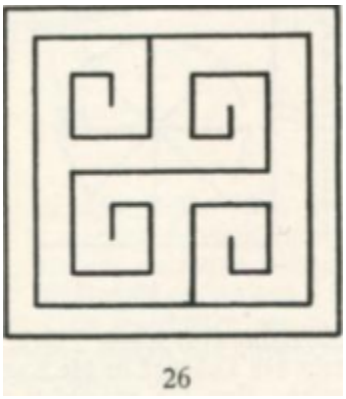
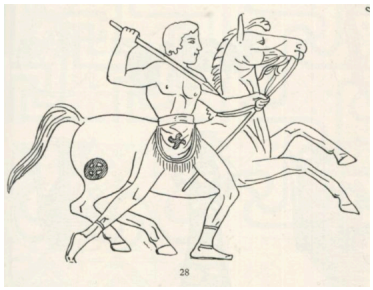


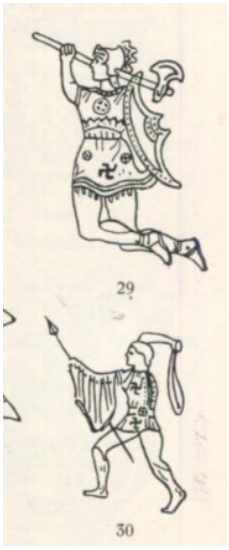

**Fig. 21. The Dasen image is filled with symbols of sun geese, beetles, crosses, swastikas, equilateral circles, all surrounded by rays. In Figs. 21 and 22, the lotus flower appears alongside the geese and the same series of symbols. At this time, the swastika appears so commonly that one might almost believe it has lost its ancient meaning; this is most evident in the double meander, which appears infinitely often as an edge, Fig. 23. However, the meander often takes a different form, approaching a spiral and a swastika, Fig. 26. On coins, the swastika appears very frequently next to the head of the sun god Apollo. The image in Fig. 24 shows Apollo driving a four-horse chariot with the swastika on his chest, the whole figure inscribed in a flaming sun disc.**

**The robe of Briseis, Achilles' lover, is decorated with swastikas, Fig. 27.**

**Fig. 25. Relief from the Pergamon Altar. Among the victory trophies depicted is the captured armor, probably of Greek origin, with two swastikas on the chest.**

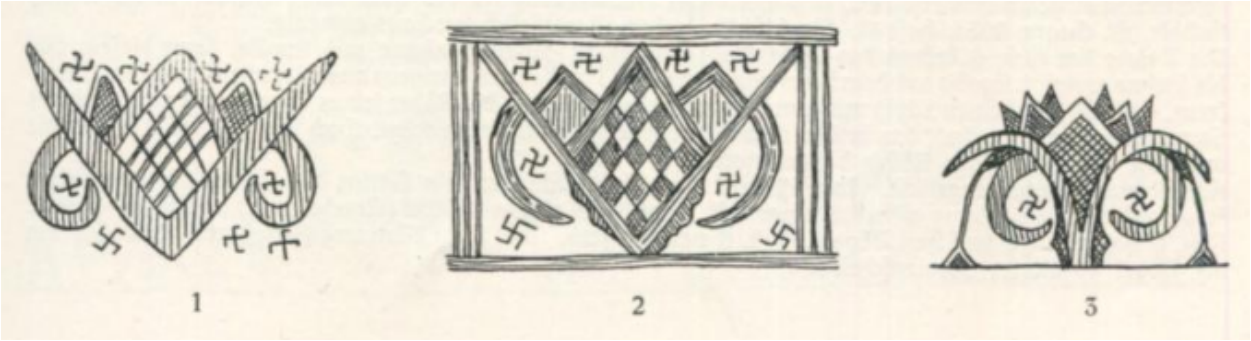



**As in Troy, where we found the swastika on maternal goddess figures, it is worn here by both women and men. The horseman has a loincloth with the swastika and leads a horse with a sun wheel on its thigh. Fig. 28.**




**In Figs. 29 and 30, we also find the sun wheel and swastika side by side.**

## Cyprus



It was not until 1000 BC that the swastika appeared in Cyprus (not as claimed by Kosmos in 1918, issue 18, at the same time as in Troy).

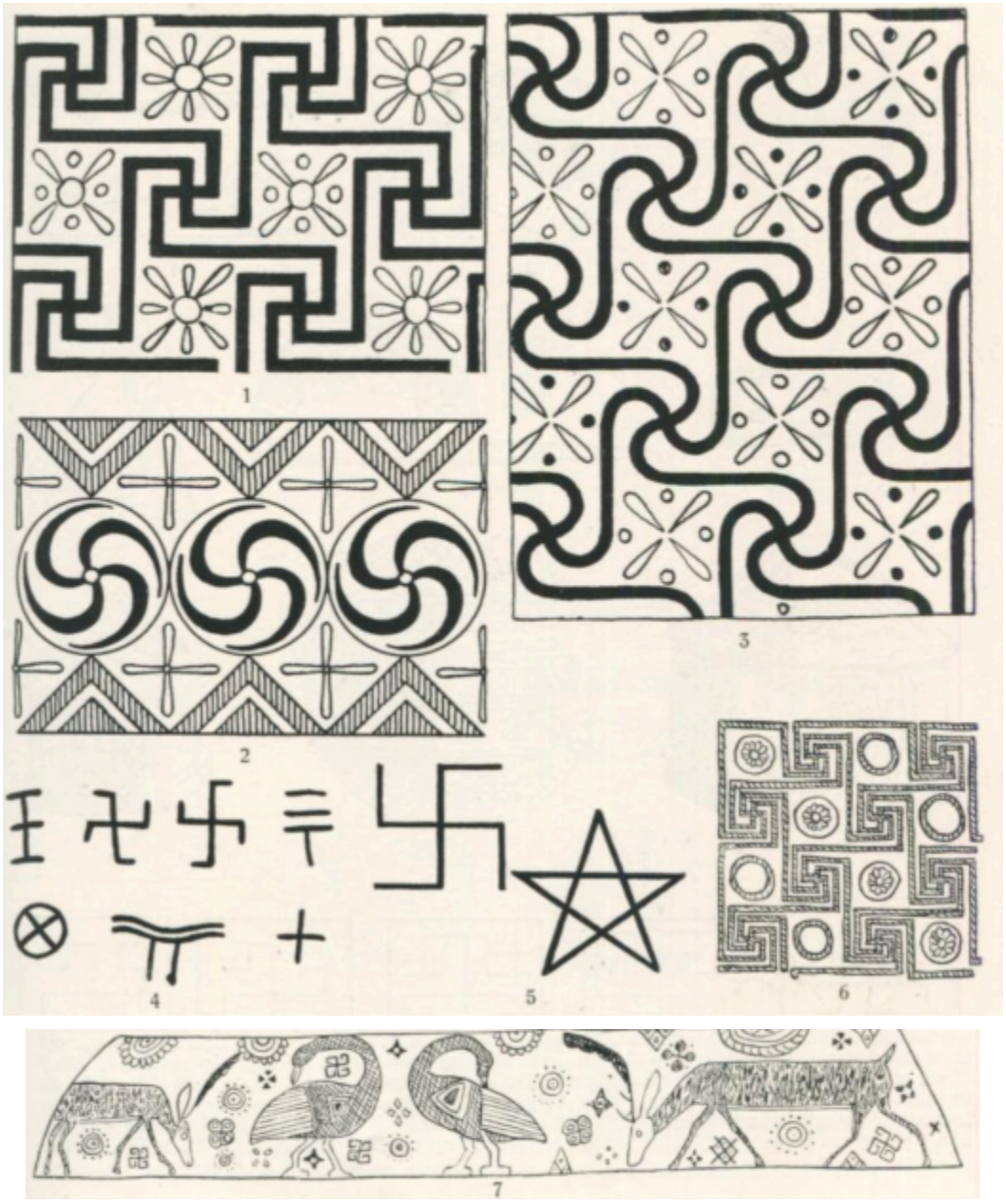
Fig. 8 belongs to the geometric style. The combination of the swastika and the lotus flower is particularly common in Cyprus.
This gave rise to the opinion that the swastika was a symbol of water, but as we can see, the connection with the lotus flower was only added later and remained only locally in the Mediterranean region, Figs.

1-3. The connection between the swastika and water has even led to the claim that the swastika originated from it because the sun's rays falling into the water are not reflected directly, but at an angle, and a stick held in the water appears broken, and that the swastika originated from this observation (according to Walter Gaedke, St. Georg, 1933, issue 4). Such an attempt is, of course, completely absurd.

The palm tree in Fig. 4 brings the swastika back into connection with Apollo, to whom the palm tree was dedicated. Apollo on the sun chariot in Fig. 11 also appears here again with the swastika. He himself carries a shield with the sun vortex, while the wheels of his chariot are drawn as a four-spoked sun wheel, each of the four corners bearing a swastika. Here, too, the rotating movement of the wheels is probably intended to emphasize the advertising effect.

Fig. 9 shows a centaur figure. Fig. 12 depicts Aphrodite, the goddess of love, who appears to have the swastika embroidered on her robe. The same goddess (arm position) is depicted in Fig. 10. Fig. 5 Swastikas between birds, Fig. 8 next to a horse, Fig. 7 on clothing (priestess), Fig. 5 next to a sun disc in the form of a bird.

## Egypt

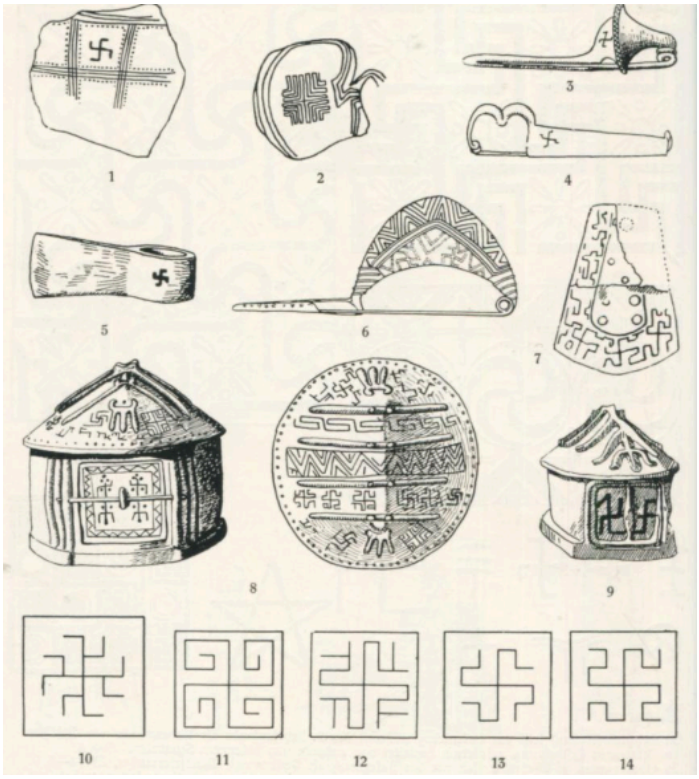


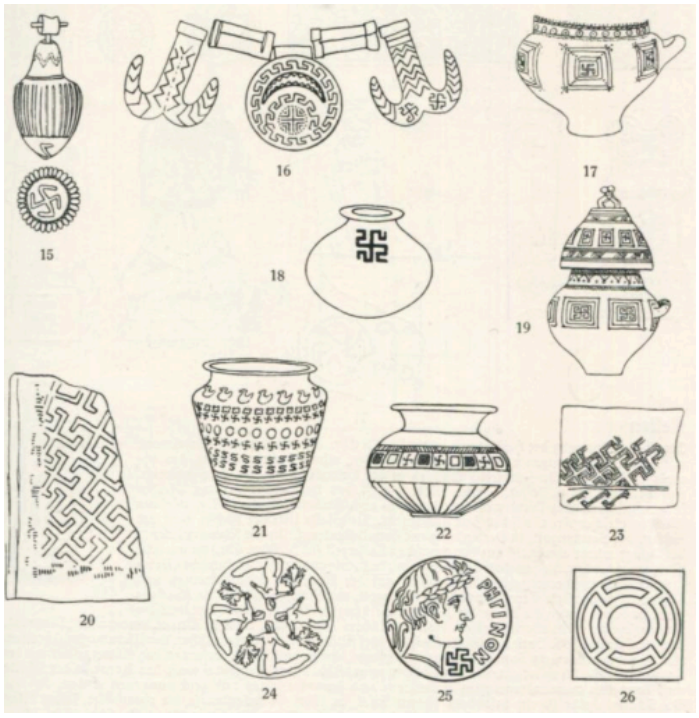

In Egypt (Kahun), the swastika appeared frequently during the 2nd millennium as a mark on the base of vessels, again accompanied by other symbols known to us, Fig. 4.

In Upper Egypt at Thebes, we find the swastika as a ceiling and wall frieze pattern, Figs. 1-3, 6. However, it does not seem to have become established there. It should be noted that ceiling patterns of the same type were found on the island of Crete at the time in question, as well as in Mycenae.

It is significant that the swastika also appears on buttons which (according to Flinders Petrie, “Mitt. des Knopfmus.” No. 11, 1916) are not native to Egypt. We also find it together with the pentagram or Drudenfuß on consecration and tomb inscriptions, where eternal life and rebirth are wished for, Fig. 5. In later times, the finds are certainly of Greek origin, as shown in Fig. 7 from Naukratis, which around 570 BC was even the main trading center and a colony of the Greeks.

**Italy**



According to Hoernes, the Stone Age origin of Fig. 1 from the Zinzulusa cave near Castro in Apulia (mentioned by Déchelette) is highly unlikely. It is more likely to date from around the year 1000. As we have already seen on Pg. 25, Fig. 28, the swastika is more common on clothing in the Bronze Age. Fig. 2 shows examples from period IV, 2, on which a completely intertwined swastika is attached. Here, as with the other clothing pins in Figs. 3, 4, 6 and pendants Fig. 7 and 15, the swastika probably had amuletic significance, as it did on weapons, where it was intended to increase their effectiveness and strength, as in Fig. 5. Fig. 7 is a clay pendant in the shape of a hatchet decorated with a swastika; this piece was also apparently used as an amulet. The hut urn in Fig. 8 bears a whole series of swastikas of various shapes, probably here with a special protective and life-giving meaning, as in Fig. 9, where the swastikas are attached to the door.

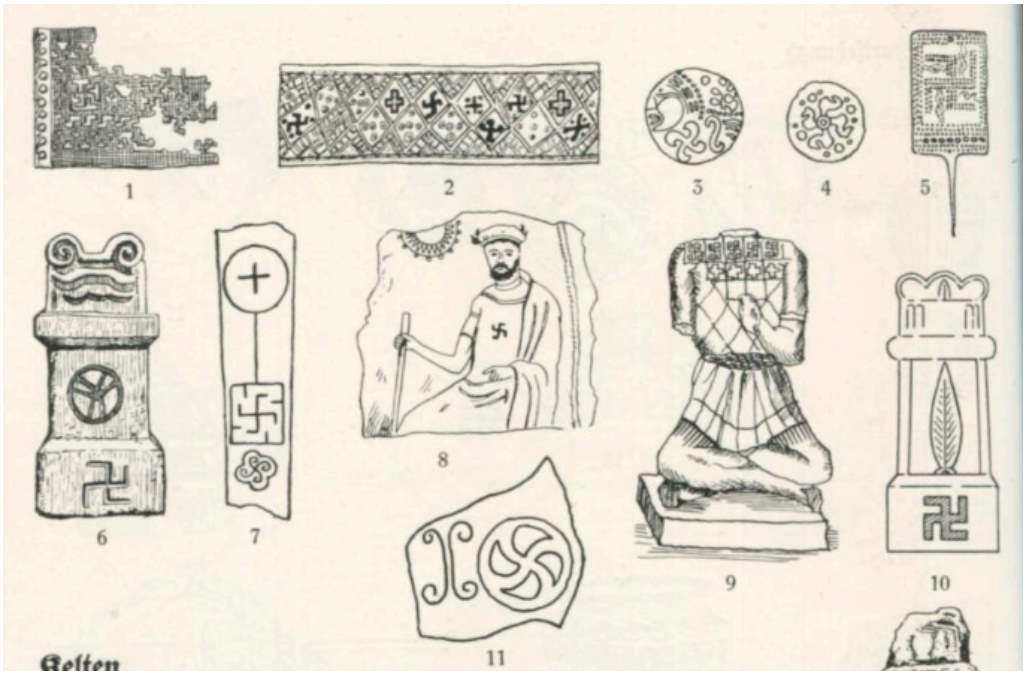
Figs. 10-14 show the main forms of swastikas from central Italy, 2nd millennium BC. The golden necklace in Fig. 16 is particularly noteworthy. In the center is a circular pendant bearing the sun in the form of an equal-armed cross framed by hooks in a semicircle, above which is the moon in the shape of a crescent, the whole surrounded by a hook line. To the right and left are two forked hooks, the right one bearing two swastikas. We have already encountered these forked symbols on page 23 (Stone Age drum from Hornsömmern). This symbol even appears at the beginning of the Neolithic period in Spain (Los Millares, Mannus 1919, p. 1520), conspicuously on a comb, which is also known to us as a symbol from the Stone Age. The forked symbol is also attested in Troy and Greece and reappears here in Italy during this period. The Christian anchor probably developed from this symbol at a later date.

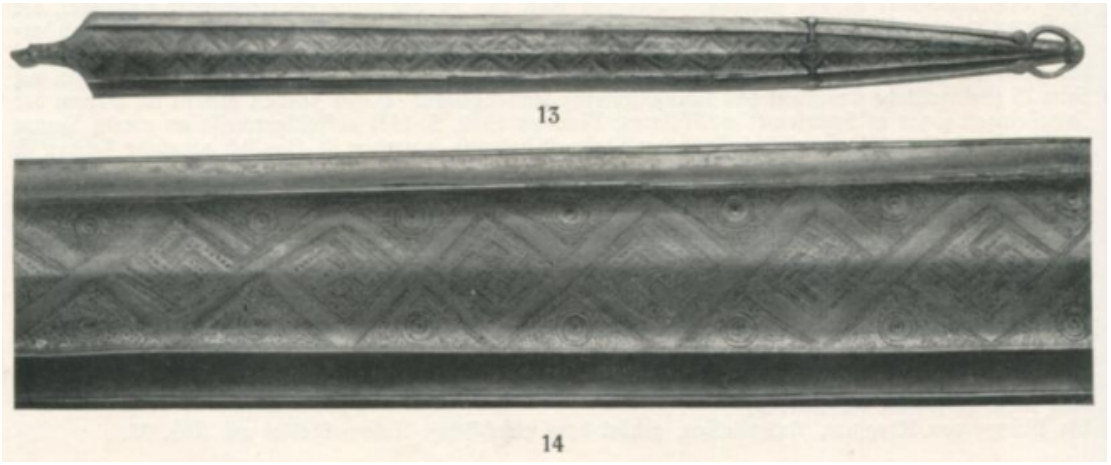
On the vessels from graves in Figs. 17, 19, and 22, the swastikas are placed in such a way that they symbolically dominate the vessel. In Fig. 21, a bronze vessel, it is associated with a bird, a cross, circles, and stylized bird eggs in the shape of an S. Fig. 20 is a stone slab from the sanctuary of Nesaktium, which dates from around 600 BC and which has yielded a whole series of similar slabs with swastika fillings. Fig. 23 (Parenza, Istria) shows very similar filling motifs.

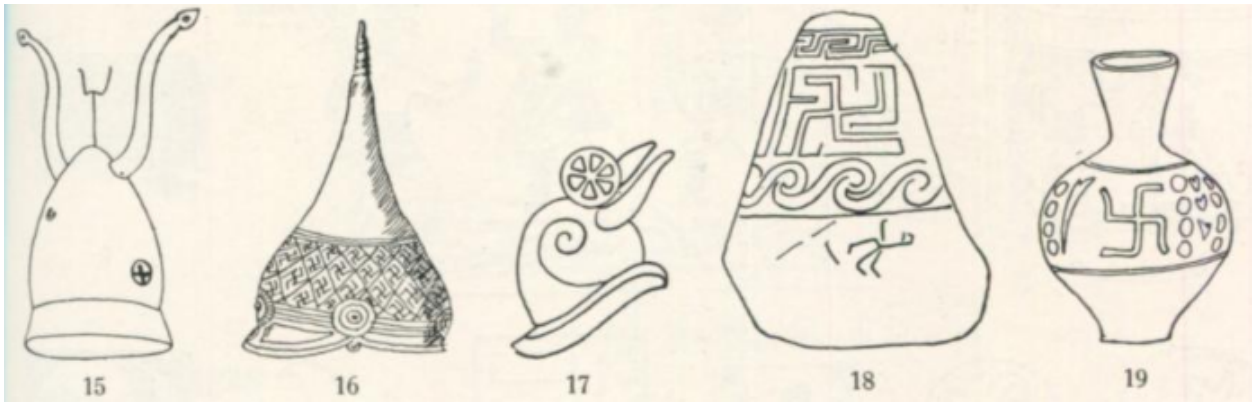
Particularly curious is the Etruscan discus on which four female bodies form a swastika. The women hold their arms in such a way that they form an equal-armed cross, while their lower legs form the hooks of the swastika, Fig. 24. The spindle whorl from Orvieto shows a swastika adapted to the circle, a form not found elsewhere in Italy. Fig. 26.

The coin from Rhegium, southern Italy, belongs to the Greek colonial area. Fig. 25.

**Celts**



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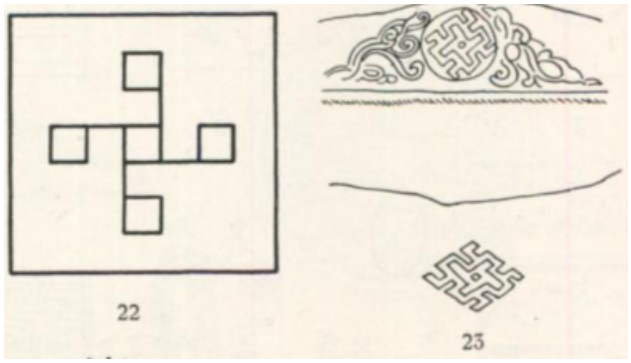
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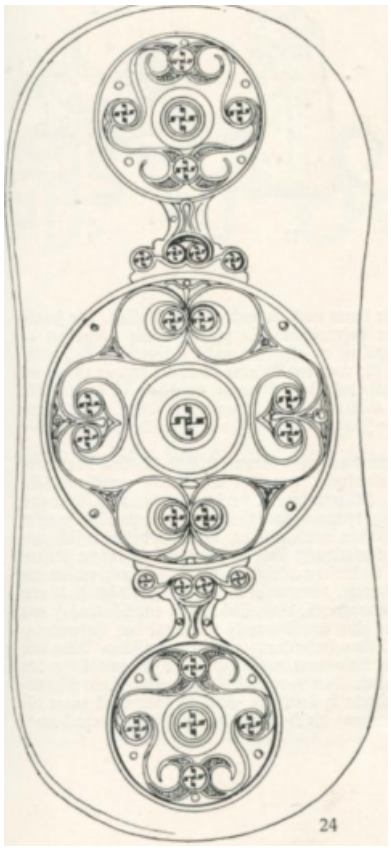
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In Alsace, during the Hallstatt period, around 1000 BC, belt plates and needles with swastikas, crosses, and circles of equal diameter appeared in an area that was Celtic at the time. In France, they became very numerous during the La Tène period, starting in 500.

On coins from the 3rd century BC (Figs. 3 and 4), the swastika is often formed from horse bodies. The horse was sacred to Belenus or Grannus Apollo, as can be seen from coins of the same type from Roman times. In any case, the supreme god of the Celts, the sun god, is associated with the swastika. In the Rhone estuary near Velaux, a sculpture dating from the Roman Empire (after 200 AD) was found depicting the god Cernunnos, as can be seen from his typical leg and arm position, Fig. 9. He is decorated on his chest with five swastikas and four crosses. Cernunnos is the stag god, his head is adorned with antlers, from the points of which hang the rings of the days of the week, Fig. 8. Next to him on the left is the sun disc; he is therefore once again a god of light (cf. Wilke, Indien, Orient, Europa in "Mannus," Vol. 10. Leipzig 1913. Verl. Kabißsch). The three altars can also be attributed to the local population.

Fig. 6 shows the swastika under the sun wheel, while Fig. 12 shows it under the figure of the god with the lance and Fig. 10 under a tree of life. Fig. 7 from Neuchâtel shows the cross in the disc, a double interlocking swastika and, below it, one with curved ends. The sword sheath is a particularly beautiful piece, featuring fourteen swastikas filling the rhombic fields, the spandrels of which are in turn filled with circles of equal diameter on the right and left, Figs. 13 and 14.

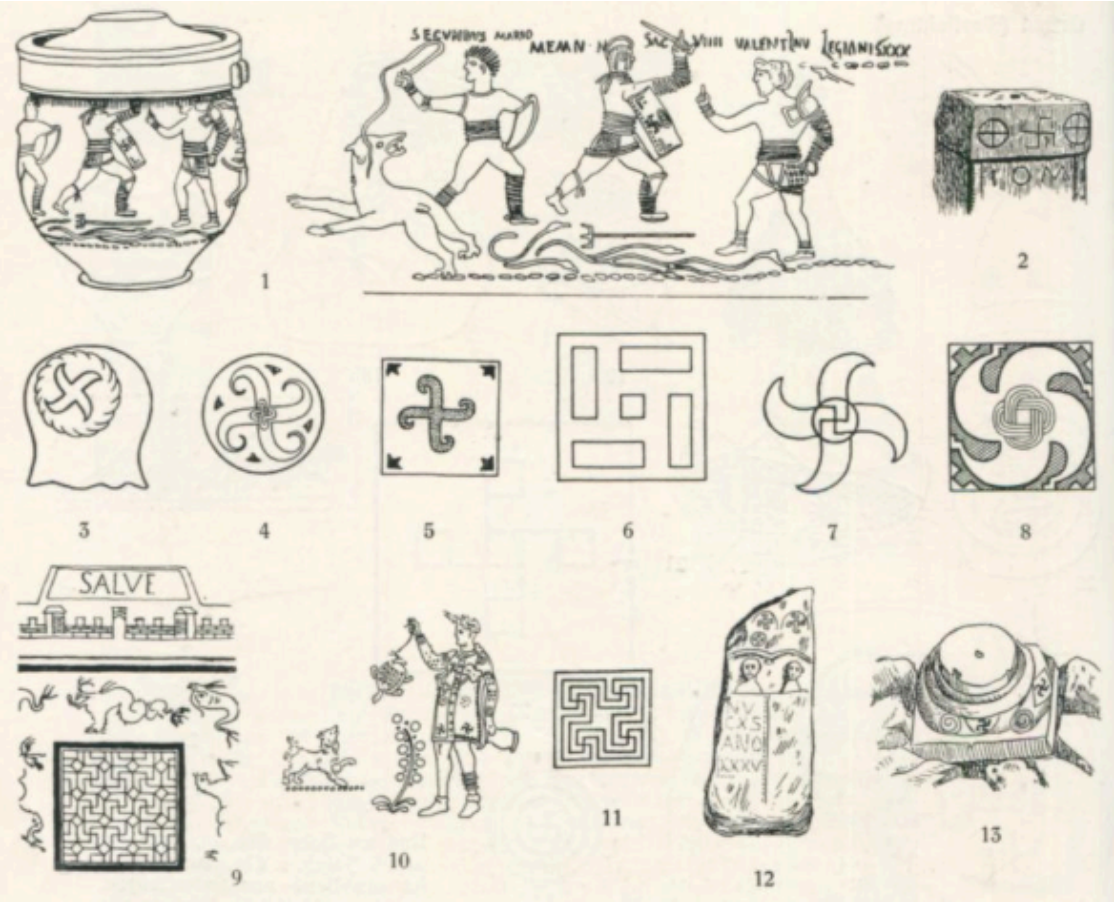
Around the helmet in Fig. 16, which dates from the 5th century BC AD, is surrounded by a band of swastikas, which probably have the same effect here as the sun wheel on the helmets in Figs. 15 and 17.

The Latène period also includes stone sculptures such as Fig. 18, which played a cultic role. On the vessel in Fig. 19, the swastika is not only to be interpreted as a decorative pattern, but as a sign of life and rebirth, because it dominates the entire surface of the vessel.

Fig. 23 shows a section of a lance blade. Here, the swastika is probably intended to confer victory and accuracy, similar to the Germanic lance tips. The wonderful, colourful shield from the Latène period (Fig. 24), which was found in the Thames, is decorated with numerous swastikas, which are intended to protect it against blows and stabs.

Fig. 22 shows the swastika shape drawn separately, in a combination with the equal-armed cross, as the five square areas were filled with red enamel, giving the impression of an equal-armed cross. Irish and Celtic stone sculptures show the sun wheel and tripod alongside the swastika (Figs. 11 and 20).
Fig. 21, which belongs to Celtic Spain, shows the swastika again between radiant sun images. Fig. 25, Scotland, shows a fusion of the swastika with the sun image of concentric circles.

## Rome




Since the founding of Rome in 753 BC, we hardly find any swastikas in Italy; the finds from the 2nd millennium BC are already discussed on page 70. It seems to have been completely forgotten, and even when it reappeared during the Imperial period, it was clearly not indigenous to Italy.
The question always arises as to whether it is of provincial Roman origin; in most cases, it is difficult to give an answer. We have no fewer than sixty floor mosaics with swastikas in Pompeii; nevertheless, it is striking enough that we do not see the swastika used either as a coin or as a divine emblem, so that even with the swastika finds in Pompeii, one must inevitably ask whether this occurrence is not due to provincial Roman influence.

The gravestone from North Africa shows both the sun wheel and the swastika side by side, Fig. 12. Of the fighting gladiators, one carries the swastika on his shield, which is supposed to grant him a pass; the vessel was found in Colchester, England, Fig. 1. The provincial origin is even more likely in the case of the altar of Ambloganna in England, Fig. 2; Dacian-Thracian legionaries are a possibility. Jupiter Optimus Maximus is invoked, as the three initial letters make clear. Above it, between two sun wheels, is the swastika.

The young man in sacrificial garb, Fig. 10, comes from a dasen image. He is crowned and wears the swastika on his sacrificial clothing. Particularly noteworthy is the turtle he holds on a string in his right hand. The turtle, and indeed the toad, plays an important role in cult and superstition (cf. Wilke, Indien, Orient, Europa, p. 146).

Fig. 13 is a column base from Algiers. Figs. 4-9, 11 are mosaic floors, one of which, from Pompeii, shows the swastika nine times, preceded by “Salve” (hail), thus as a sign of good luck. The swastika from the Roman villa in Wiltingen, Württemberg, Fig. 8, has the Solomon's knot at its center, which is a variation of the swastika itself, just like Fig. 4 (from Constantine, Algiers). Fig. 5 is also from there. Fig. 7 is a mosaic image from Trier, with the left-facing swastika again at the center. Fig. 11 is the center section of a Roman mosaic from Newton (England).

Fig. 3 shows the swastika as a shooting mark on the back of a Roman helmet.

## Bronze Age Finds from Germanic Regions

Among the Germanic tribes, the swastika first appeared on monuments in the Bronze Age, in a rounded form, usually ending in spirals, as we saw in the Neolithic period in the painted pottery of southeastern Europe. One finds it quite frequently in finds since the second period of the Bronze Age, around 1600 BC, for example on the two bronze buttons shown in Figs. 7 and 12 (enlarged). The needle found in the border region of the Germanic tribes, Fig. 14, also dates from the second period and, based on its symbolic representation, belongs to the Germanic circle. The swastika often forms the central image on bronze hanging boxes, Figs. 2-4, 8-11, some of which are beautifully crafted, Fig. 13. The fact that this is not merely a decorative pattern is demonstrated by its alternation with the tripod or by the rock carvings, which are exclusively religious in content. The tripod next to the dragon ship and sun on the razor (cult object) also confirms this. We find several garment pins in the shape of the swastika, Fig. 15.

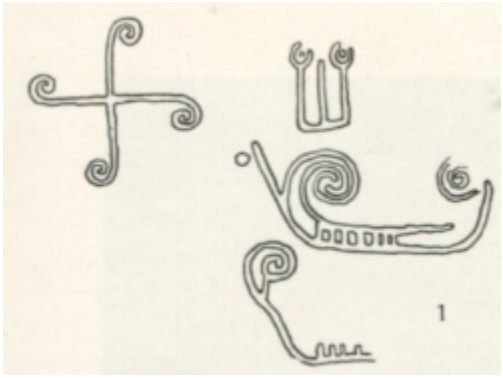
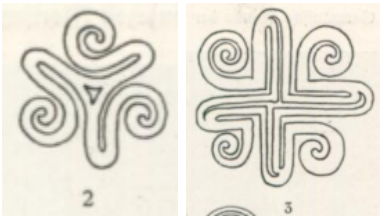



**Fig. 1 Swedish rock carving from Tose, Tunge district.**




**Figs. 2, 3 Swastika and tripod from hanging vessels.**

**Fig. 4 From a bronze hanging vessel, swastika in the center, matching the upper rock carving.**

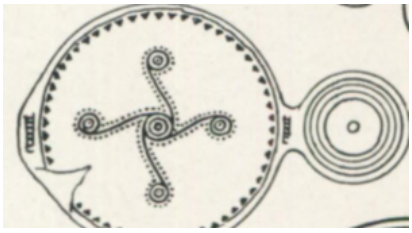


**Fig. 5 Bronze Age (Period 4) garment pin.**

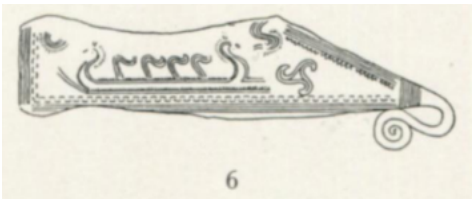



**Fig. 6 Razor from Mehlbeck, Holstein.**

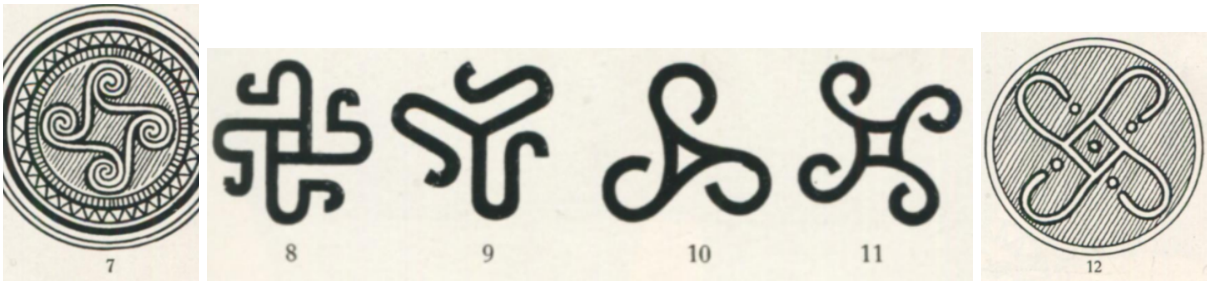


**Fig. 13 Decoration on hanging vessel, Sophienhof, Demmin district (Stettin Museum). The middle section shows a flaming sun disc with a swastika.**

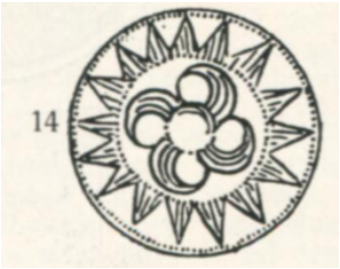



**Fig. 14 Head of a disc needle from Tschetzschow (Lebus district). Inserted into the sun disc is a swastika enclosing an equal-armed cross formed by five circles in a cross-shaped arrangement (cf. window of Milan Cathedral, Pg. 38, Fig 20).**

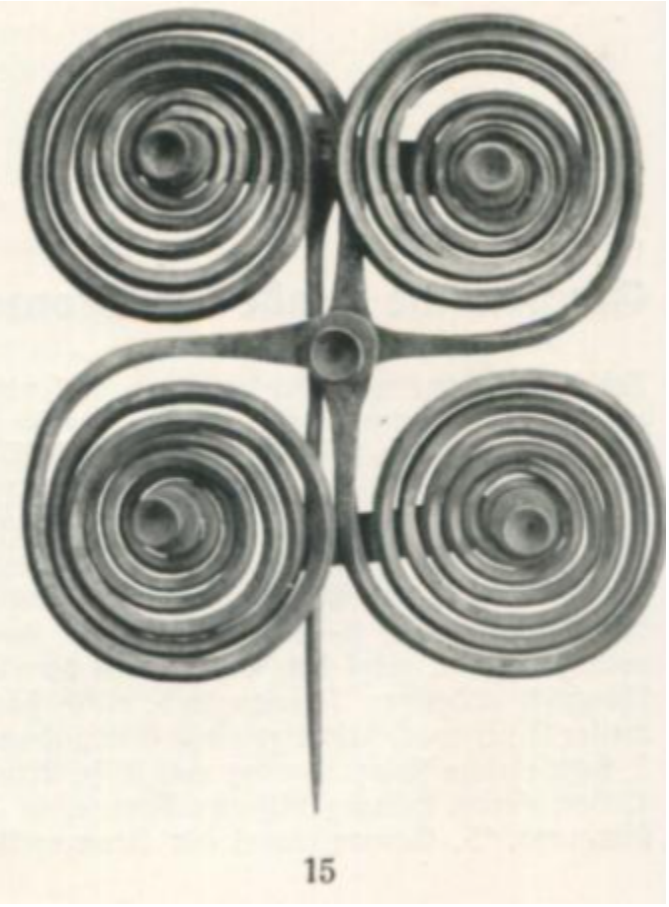
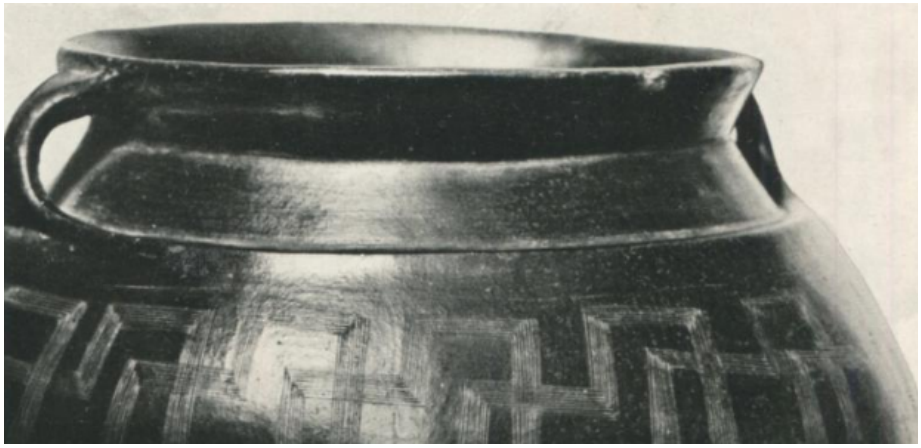
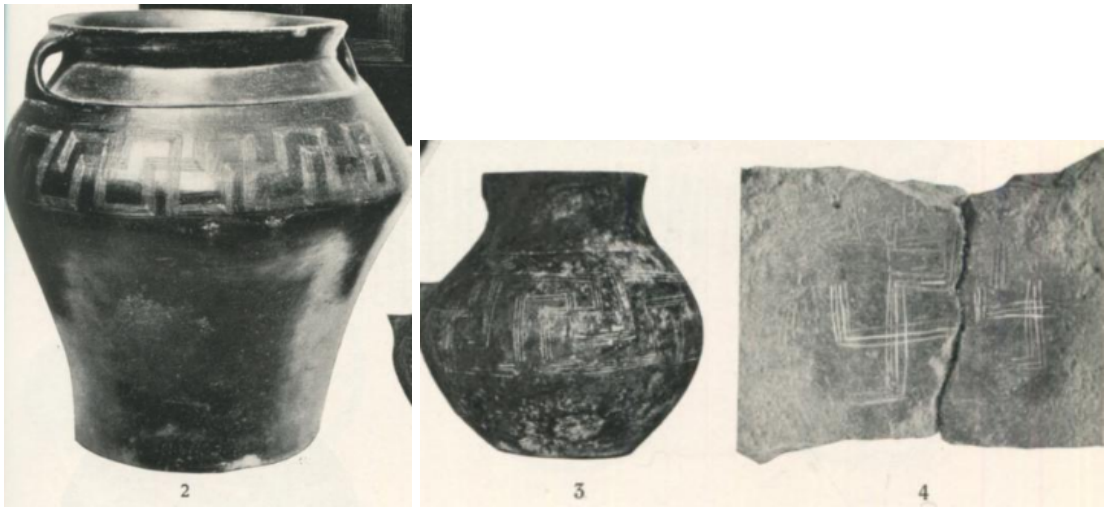



**Fig. 15 Bronze Age swastika pin from the Kölpin hoard (Stettin Museum).**

## Germanic Tribes (From the Beginning of our Calendar)






Towards the end of the Latène period (100 BC), finds with swastikas became very numerous again, after having receded somewhat in appearance for several centuries at the end of the Bronze Age, around 800 BC. It now appeared very frequently and remained in use until Christian times.
In southern Russia, the Goths who migrated there around 214 BC developed new styles that spread to the other Germanic tribes. They used the swastika again with extraordinary frequency, and so we find it in Germany first on the so-called meander urns of the East Germanic tribes and then on those of the West Germanic tribes. This decoration is certainly ornamental in many cases, but it should not be forgotten that the perfect meander is actually almost absent and that chessboard patterns also appear alongside the swastika (cf. Mannus, vol. 6, on the symbolic meaning of the chessboard pattern). The arrangement shown in Fig. 24 alone speaks for a purely symbolic meaning. The swastikas are connected in such a way that a fifth one is formed in the middle, which appears to be surrounded by an equal-armed cross. Above all, however, the spearheads from the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, which are decorated with swastikas and other various sacred symbols, show that they were considered effective and powerful symbols of salvation.

On the runic spear from Müncheberg, Fig. 19, on the left is the symbol interpreted as a sun ship, perhaps more likely the moon, and on the right is the tripod and swastika.

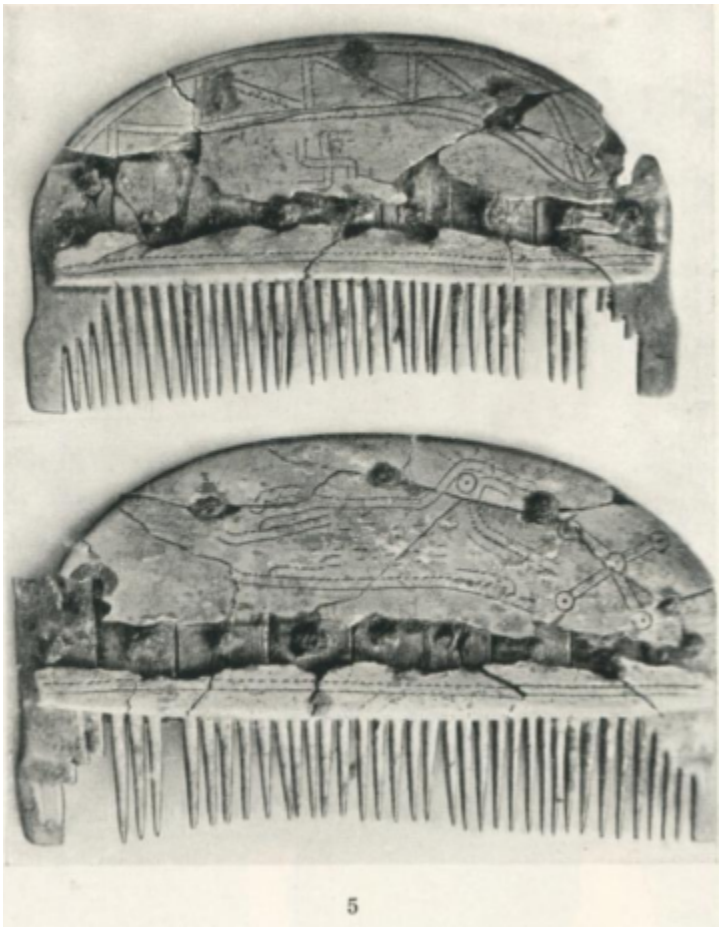
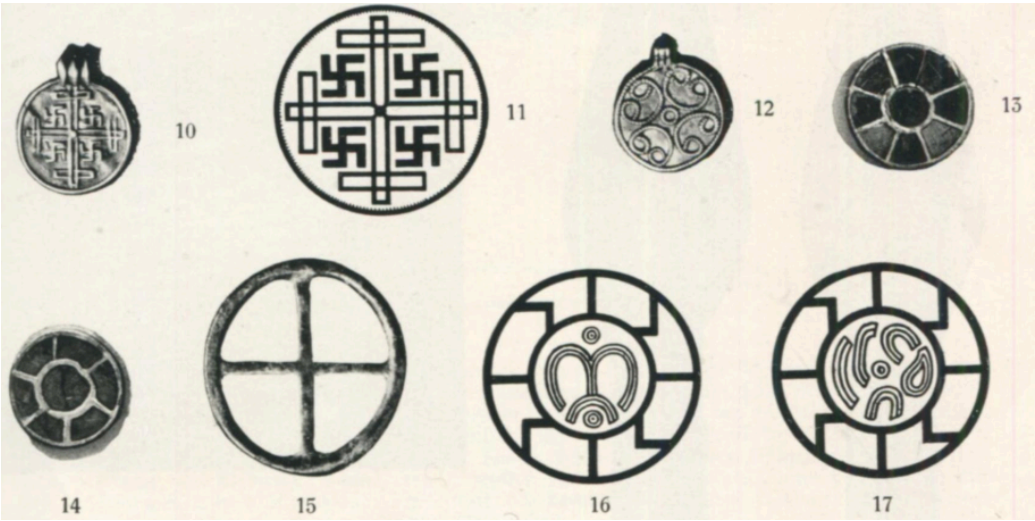



**Fig. 5 A particularly valuable piece is a comb from Freyburg a.d. Unstrut, which shows the swastika on the front and a galloping horse on the back, a creature drawn in the style of animal ornamentation, in front of which there is a lying cross; it is therefore probably meant to represent Wodan's horse.**

**Fig. 6 Germanic decorative pin from the 6th century. Swastika ending in stylized animal heads, with a ring disc at the intersection.**

**Pendants from the graves of Müngersdorf near Cologne.**

**Fig. 7 Double swastika. Fig. 8 - Ribbon cross. Fig. 9 - Swastika in a bow cross.**




A grave of particular cultic significance is that of a Germanic priestess from the Obermöllern cemetery in Thuringia. The grave contained a pig's head treated according to ritual custom, several spindle whorls used on spindles for spinning, and an iron rod with flint and quartzite fragments. Of two disc needles, one was shaped like a wheel cross, similar to our iron cross, Fig. 13, the other like a six-spoked wheel, Fig. 14. Two gold pendants were decorated with heart crosses, Fig. 12, while another pendant showed a distinctly Nordic animal style. On the last pendant, Fig. 10, there was a particularly striking symbolic composition: on the circular disc, presumably intended to represent a wheel, there was an equal-armed cross, which was divided into four Latin crosses by the crossbars at the ends (post cross). Between the angles of the equal-armed cross, however, there were four right-facing swastikas. In addition to the photograph of the find, we also provide a separate drawing of the symbolic image, Fig. 11.
Another woman's grave, in which seven eggs were found as grave goods, yielded two disc needles (Figs. 16 and 17) depicting a sun wheel with a left-facing swastika inscribed in each. In one case, there is a stylized figure in the center circle, and in the other, a head with animal ornamentation.
Another grave yielded another sun wheel, Fig. 15, so that we find truly remarkable finds of ancient Germanic symbols in Obermöllern.

**Fig. 18 A Visigothic gravestone, which shows two swastikas facing each other under a sun disc with a vortex in the middle, dates from the 7th century.**

**Rune lance from Müncheberg, Fig. 19a, left: the symbol interpreted as a sun ship, but perhaps more likely the moon. On the right, the tripod and swastika. Other side, Fig. 19b, left, the moon and rune inscription: Raninga (name of the owner), right, lightning symbol and, at the base of the leaf, the sun once on each quarter of the curve.**

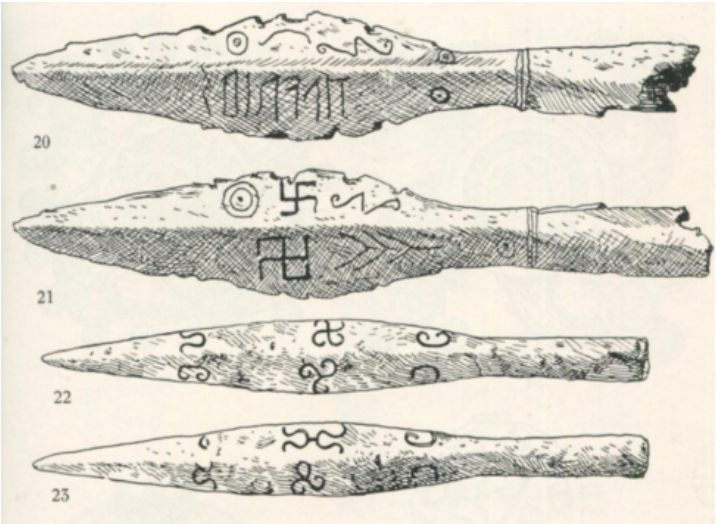



**Fig. 22 shows a tripod and a hook cross. The other C- and lyre-shaped symbols are, as can be seen from a comparison with South Russian stone slabs, incomplete lightning symbols (cf. Götze, Mannus, vol. 1, 1909, p. 121 ff.). Fig. 23 shows a complete lightning symbol, next to it a tripod and parts of the lightning symbol. The Gothic rune lance from Kowel, Fig. 21, bears a swastika on the left and three interlocking angular symbols, moon (or sun), on the right, equidistant circles, sun, swastika, half lightning symbol; Fig. 20, left, Tilarids (name of the owner). Sun, on the right again sun, moon, half lightning bolt, sun. All these symbols point to southern Russia, which can be explained by the fact that in the centuries in question, East Germanic tribes migrated to southern Russia and the Black Sea.**

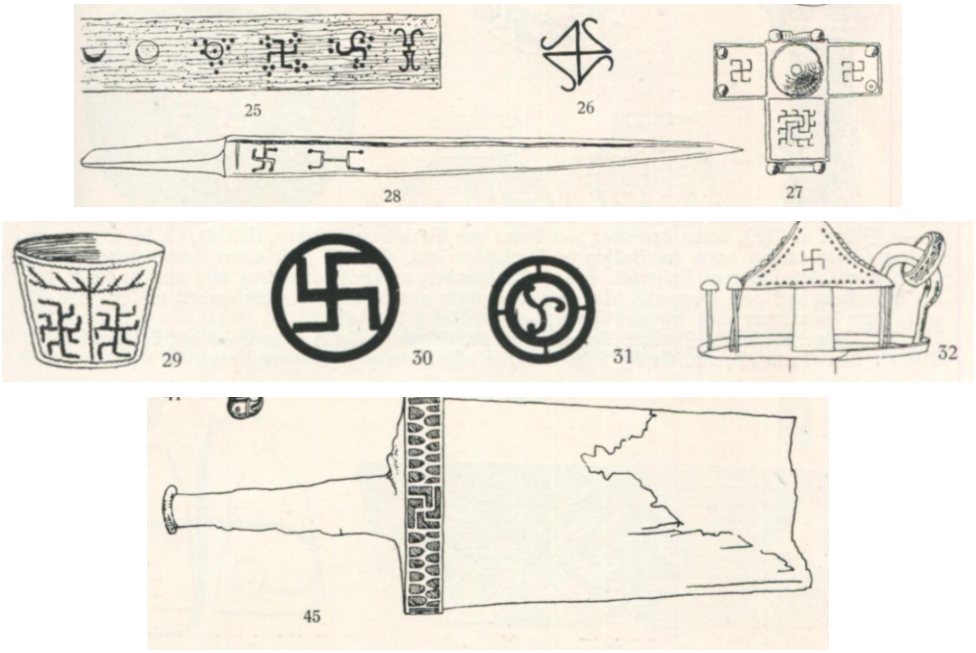
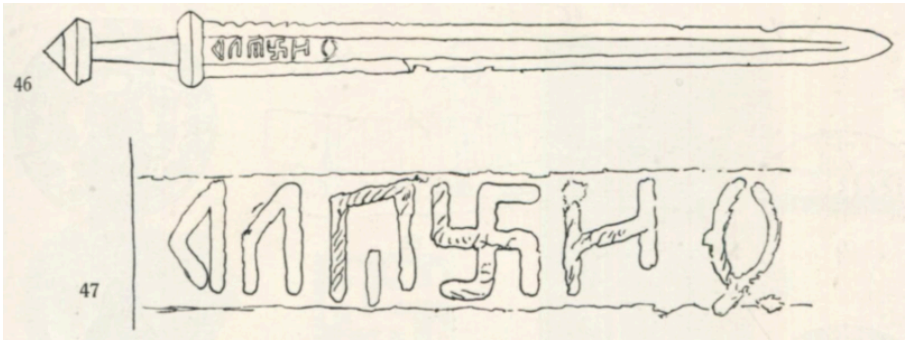


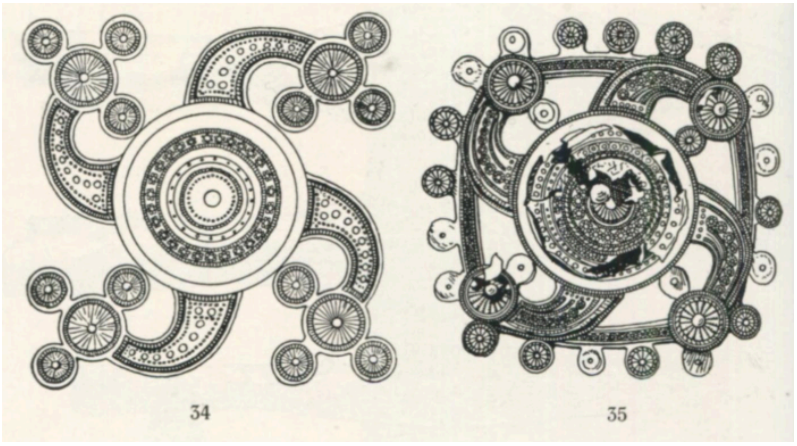

**Fig. 26 depicts a swastika composed of two lightning bolts, which occurs in this form both in southern Russia and in the burial ground of Fohrde, in the province of Brandenburg. The same combination of symbols, including the swastika and the tripod, appears in the Vimose find, Figs. 25**

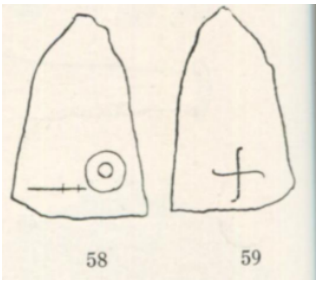
**and 28. Fittings, dice cups, and decorative discs were found in the Thorsberg Moor find from the same period, Figs. 27, 29, 30, 31. What is particularly interesting about the fitting is that a row of hooks pointing in the same direction has been added to the angled ends of the swastika, apparently to reinforce and emphasize the movement. The swastika appears several times on swords, as in Figs. 32 and 45 (5th century AD).**



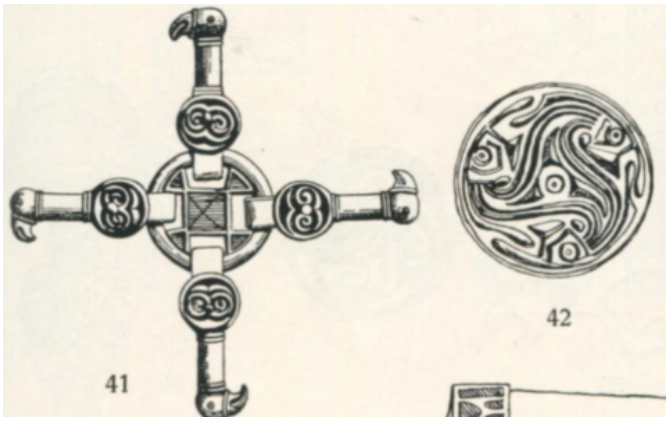

**On the sword from Saebö, Norway (8th century AD, figs. 46 and 47), it appears in the middle of the runic inscription, which probably states that Thurmuth is the owner; in this case, the swastika would mean Thor as a character; however, it is also possible that it was inserted as a symbol of salvation to give the weapon power and strength.**

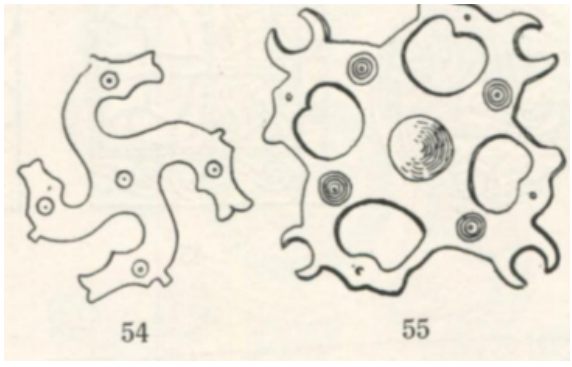
**The religious significance is particularly evident on the gold brackets, as these are amulets and the images of the gods depict Wodan or Thor with the swastika as a symbol, Fig. 36, while Fig. 40 also shows the tripod.**

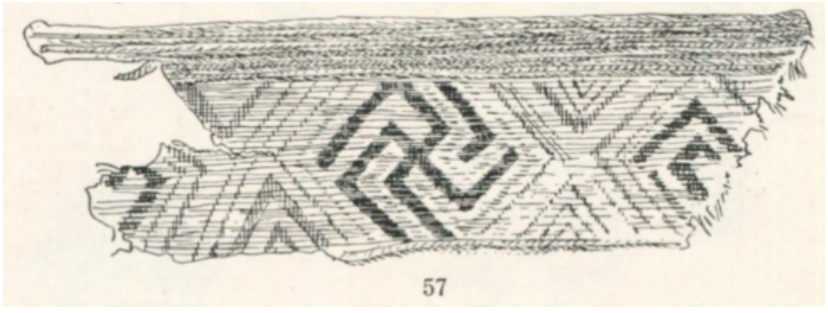


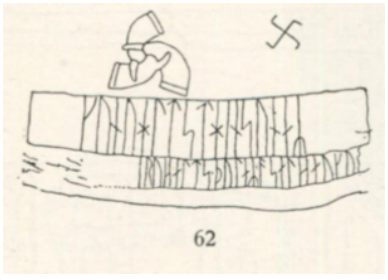




**In Figs. 34 and 35, we see concentric circles next to the swastika; both can be found again on a stone from a burial mound in Näsby (around 600 AD), Figs. 58 and 59. Next to the concentric rings (sun) is a horizontal bar with two crossbars.**




**A large group is formed by the animal ornamental clasps (6th-8th century AD), whose three or four legs consist of animal bodies, Figs. 41, 42, 54, 55; the bent ends then regularly end in animal heads. Fig. 57 shows a remnant of fabric from a grave of the late imperial period (4th-5th century AD); thus, the swastika was also worn on clothing during this period. On the runestone from Zealand (8th century AD), Fig. 62, there is a three-legged animal claw next to the swastika.**

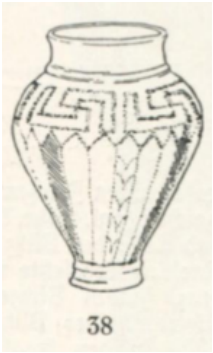



**Fig. 38 West Germanic vessel, found in Darzau.**

**Fig. 39 East Germanic vessel from the end of the La Tène period.**

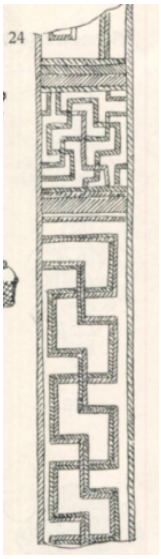
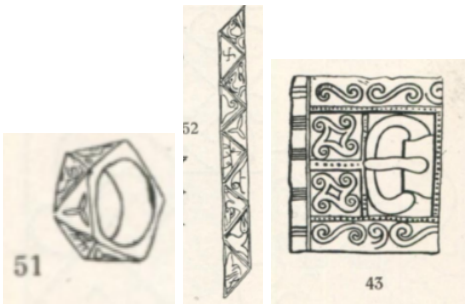
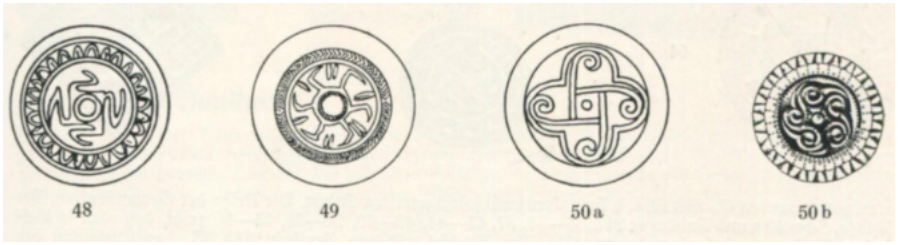


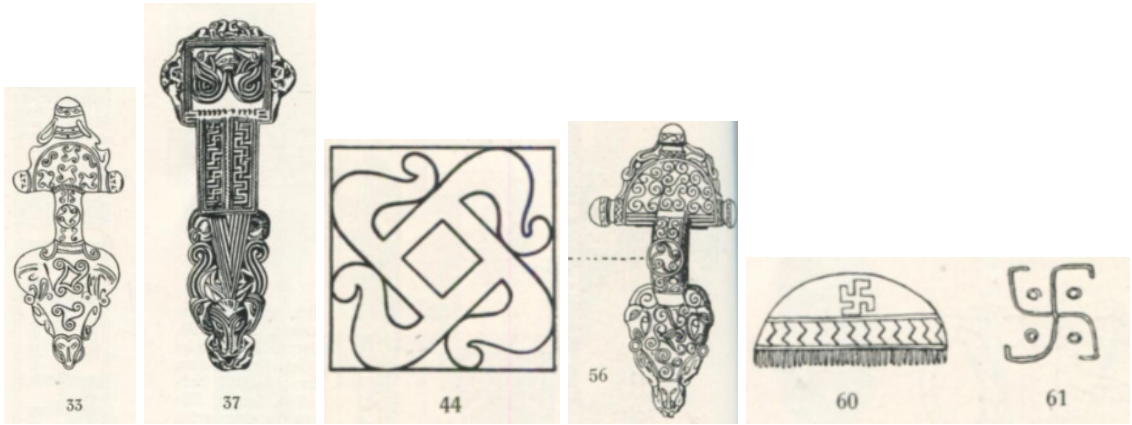

**Fig. 24 From an East Germanic vessel, five swastikas form an equilateral cross.**

## Germanic Tribes (From the Beginning of the Migration Period)




**As shown in Figs. 51, 52, and 43, the swastika also appears on rings and fittings. It can be found on all kinds of brooches; Figs. 48-50b show four Anglo-Saxon brooches. In Fig. 48, the arms are spider-like, Fig. 49 has six arms, thus more of a swastika sun vortex, but it nevertheless illustrates that the idea of rotation has not disappeared. Fig. 50a, b show a swastika with spiral-rolled ends.**



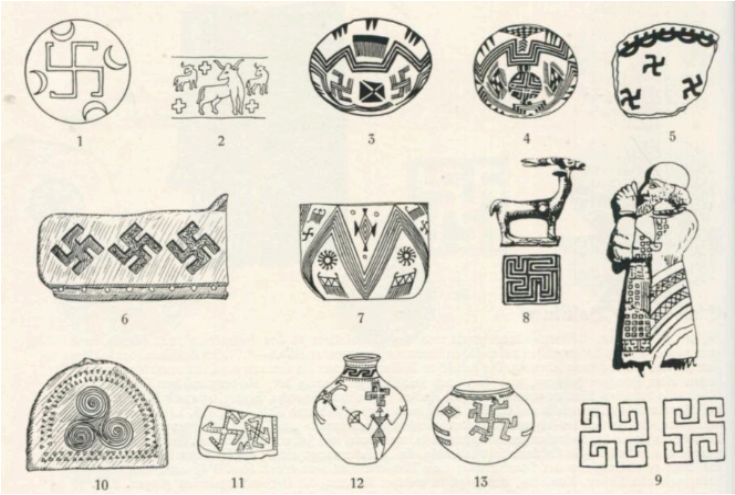

**The series of garments, fittings, buckles, and pendants in Figs. 33-35, 37, 41-44, 48-50, 54-56, and 63-66 show that the swastika was used in many different ways. The alternation with the tripod (Fig. 33), the cross arms ending in horned animal heads (Thor symbols, Fig. 55), horse heads (Odin symbols, Fig. 54), or bird heads (Odin symbols, Fig. 41) demonstrates how strongly religious ideas played a role in their use. We also find the swastika on Saxon pottery, Fig. 61. It also appears on combs, Fig. 60.**

## Slavs and the Baltic region

The swastika is quite common among the Slavs of the Migration Period and the Middle Ages, where it is often used as a symbol on vessels, Figs. 6-8, 11. In the Baltic region, it has been in use since the beginning of our calendar.

The Baltic peoples, which include the Lithuanians, Latvians, and Germanized ancient Prussians, form an independent branch of the Indo-European family of peoples and are therefore not classified as Slavs. They have preserved many ancient elements in their language, mythology, and folk art. In Latvia, the swastika (Figs. 1-3, 4, 9, 10) is regarded as a symbol of the sun, representing the ever-repeating process of renewal and rejuvenation. The Latvian name for the swastika is “ugunskrusts”, which means “fire cross.” The swastika is still very much alive in Latvia today. It is the distinguishing mark of Latvian military aircraft and is also widely used as a watermark by the state printing office. Fig. 9 is a Bronze Age swastika from Koban, Caucasus, which shows the direction of the connecting lines.
Fig. 10 Cloak from the late Iron Age (found in Ikolas) reconstructed from the remains found.

## Asia Minor




On a coin from Asia Minor (Fig. 1), the swastika is surrounded by four moons, so it must be the sun itself. The clay cylinder from Elam (Fig. 2) shows that here in Mesopotamia, the connection between the cross (Tau) and the horned animal was just as well known as in the Danube region, Crete, India, or China.
Figs. 3-5 belong to the painted pottery of Susa - Fig. 5 from Tepe Moussian, Figs. 3 and 4 from Susa itself. The same pottery is also found in Samarra. Here, Herzfeld was able to prove that it belongs to the younger Bronze Age (late Minoan) and not to the Babylonian-Assyrian culture. With the exception of Susa pottery, the swastika does not appear anywhere in the ancient Near East. It is only found in the Hittite circle, Figs. 7-9, for example on the royal relief of Iriz near Eregli in the Taurus Mountains, where it appears on the king's robe, Fig. 9. As a stamp, it is again associated with the horned animal, Fig. 8, and at the same time its labyrinthine arrangement is reminiscent of Crete.
Fig. 7 from a Hittite vessel, the swastika next to a comb, hook swirls, and a rhombic cross. The Hittites are an Indo-European people, in contrast to the Assyrians and Babylonians.

## Caucasus

The swastika did not appear in the Caucasus region until the late Bronze Age. As Wilke proved in "Weltall 1919", issue 23/24 ("Solar and Lunar Eclipses in the Beliefs and Performing Arts of Indo-European Prehistory"), the struggle between the sun and the moon is often depicted on cylinder seals from Susa, Cyprus, etc. The sun is often depicted as a sun stag or a wheel, in front of which the hero stands protectively with his bow; the waxing moon goddess, who wants to devour the sun, is cow-shaped and accompanied by the underworld animals dog and snake, or she is depicted as an antelope. We see the same image in Fig. 12, with the attacking antelope on the left and the archer on the right, standing protectively in front of the sun symbolized by the swastika. This reference is particularly significant because these are common Indo-European – i.e. Stone Age – ideas, thus providing further strong evidence that the swastika had the same meaning from the very beginning.
Figs. 6 and 10 Metal plates with swastika and spiral tripod.
Fig. 13 Burial vessel.

## Islam

The swastika has also found its way into Islamic art. Ornamentation plays a very special role in Islam, as depictions of human beings are forbidden; as a result, we find the most wonderful ornamental images on all walls, windows, and facades, very often with star motifs as the main composition.
Although it cannot be denied that in most cases the swastika has been reduced to a mere ornament, its symbolic value remains unmistakable even in later times.
The symbolic value of the swastika is hinted at in the Muslim sense, in that the swastika is often formed as an "Ali cross," which corresponds to the fourfold spelling of the word "Ali" and thus became a symbol of the prophet.

**Fig. 1 From the Alhambra in Granada (from the time of the Arab occupation of Spain). Swastika surrounded by four other swastikas arranged in such a way that they form a variation of the swastika, as shown in Fig. 6.**

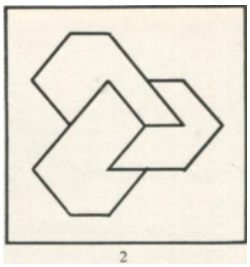



**Fig. 2 The triskelion is found, albeit less frequently, in the Muslim cultural sphere. From the Persian manuscript "Schach Nameh".**

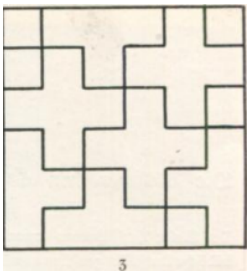



**Fig. 3 Frieze consisting of a swastika and an equal-armed cross from the Moorish palace of the Khan in Chokand (Turkestan).**

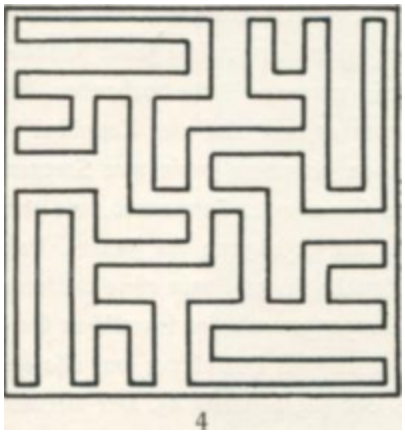
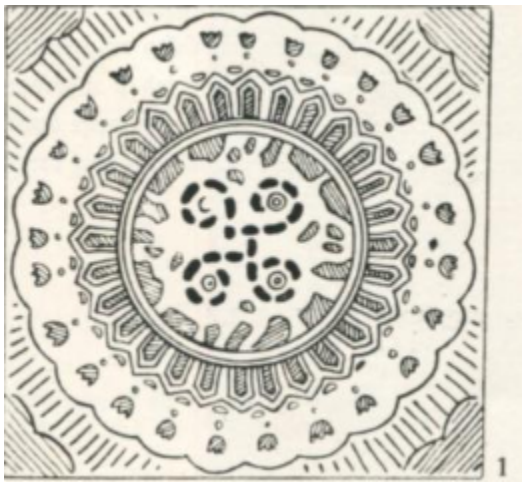


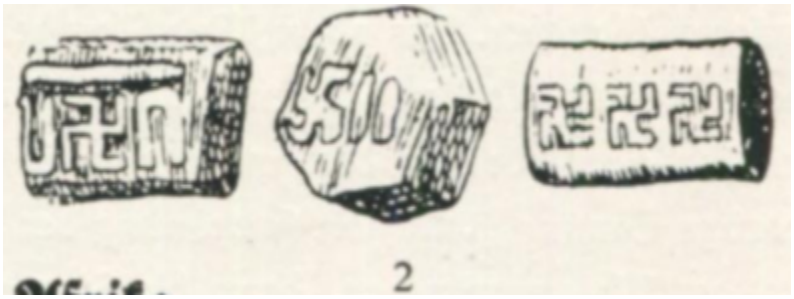

**Fig. 4 From a wall in Urfa (upper Euphrates), opposite Abraham's Mosque, the swastika as an Alik cross in a slightly modified form.**

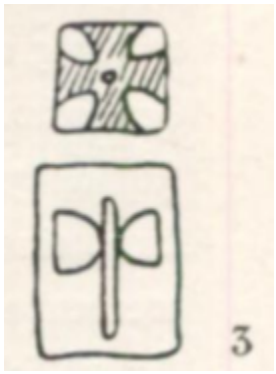
**Fig. 5 Jadeite plate from Persia, with the so-called Alikreuz, the swastika formed from the fourfold name of the Prophet.**

**Fig. 6 Mosque in Damascus. Modified swastika, as found countless times in Muslim buildings.**

## Africa




Even today, the swastika symbol can be found in various parts of Africa as a tattoo pattern, although it is not possible to determine with certainty whether it is actually a swastika. Among the Ashanti, the weights on the upper side bear swastikas. This attests to a symbolic meaning, as a comparison with Fig. 3 clearly shows; in ancient Greece, the weights bore crosses and double axes as symbols. On the modern grave tile from Algiers, Fig. 1, the swastika probably serves as a phylactery, a protective symbol against evil spirits.

## The Creation of the World as Depicted on a Carpet

In 1909, during a trip to Persia, the painter Karl Warron acquired a carpet whose symbolic representations were explained to him by the family of carpet weavers, who had owned the carpet for over 100 years. This account reveals that the swastika, as associated with the fire drill, was only later associated with the legend in order to symbolically link earthly fire with heavenly fire.

There was a series of these carpets which depicted the entire story of creation.
In the center of both medallions, surrounded by yellow and red flames and stars and sun-like formations, is a cross with hooks: the fire wheel or sun wheel, as indicated by the weaver, the first mechanical device invented to produce fire. The fact that the transfer of the swastika to this fire-making device is secondary is now readily apparent from this depiction, because here the swastika is taken as the starting point of the

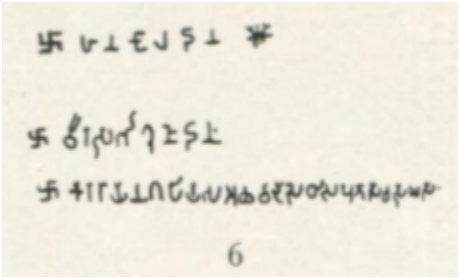
cosmic development process. In interpreting the fire device as a swastika, the parallelism in the lawfulness and creativity of fire was therefore the given reason.

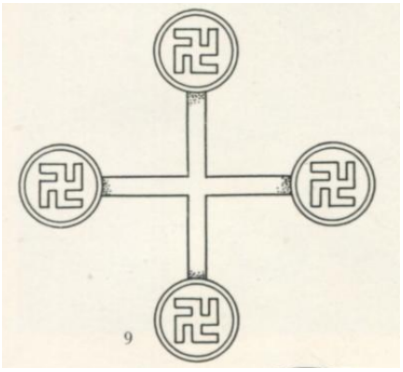
The course of the events described can be followed most clearly if one begins by looking at the four three-part figures located at the four corners of the two horizontal rectangles. These four figures form a unified eight-pointed star, like those that emerge in groups of three from the flames, pointing upwards or downwards. The presence of these four star quarters and the way they are arranged around the wheel swastika indicate, first, that the sun wheel swastika should be regarded as a cosmic process in action, and second, that the effect of the sun wheel swastika has caused a star formation to be blown apart or dissolved. The further pictorial structure shows that the sulphurous and fiery flames, which each time form a flaming swastika, originate from this dissolution, and that the sun-like units emerging from the flames and connected to each other have formed from the substance of this primordial unity in dissolution. This is intended to express that material evolution takes its course through material dissolution.

So says the weaver! Translated into our language: Die and become reborn! Or, evolution can only be achieved through revolution!

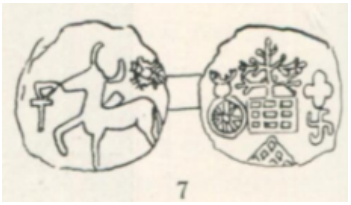
The images outside the medallions refer to the parallel development on our planet - the upper medallion shows an earlier stage of development, the lower one a later stage, with the two figures in the three corners serving as a scale for the difference in time: three star and animal figures at the top and nine at the bottom. The difference is also clearly emphasized by a new type of coloring, by the arrangement of the animals and birds, and by the gradually lush flora, for the stars surrounding the two medallions on a red background are meant to represent flowers.

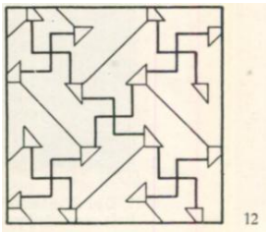
## India and Tibet



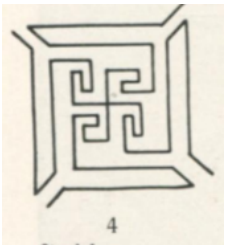


**The earliest archaeological finds in India date back to the 5th century BC. The burial mound of Buddha (477 BC) contained swastikas on gold plates. The oldest Buddha inscriptions with the swastika symbol come from the Sanchi Stupa, Fig. 6, which are preceded by the swastika; here there is also a bas-relief depicting the "wheel of law," an equal-armed cross ending in four beams, each in a circle with a swastika pointing to the left, Fig. 9. Here, too, the concepts of the cross, the sun wheel, the wheel of the year, and the wheel of law are intertwined.**



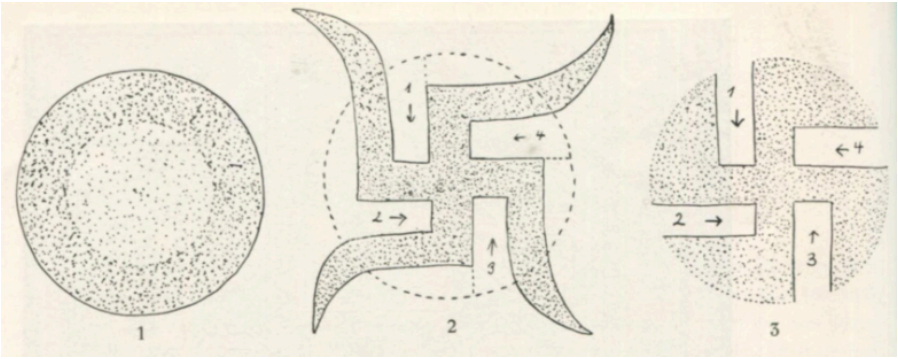


**On some coins, the swastika is very often placed next to the sun wheel, the sacred tree, the altar, the cross, the handle cross (key of life), and the trishula, Fig. 7. As in Europe, footprints themselves were objects of religious veneration until Christian times (cf. Schlesiens Vorzeit, vol. 5, 1909: "The Stone with the Footprints of St. Adalbert in Breslau Cathedral"; Wilke, op. cit., pp. 230-247; Mannus, vol. 7, p. 4; Essenwein, Kulturhistorische Atlas 1883, plate 24/25); they also play a role in cults in India. The footprints of Buddha from the Amaravati Stupa, Fig. 8, bear, among other symbols such as an equal-armed cross, a handle cross, and sun images, the swastika. The stupa from Sarnath near Benares also bears a frieze of swastikas, with a sau swastika in the middle between four swastikas, Fig. 12.**



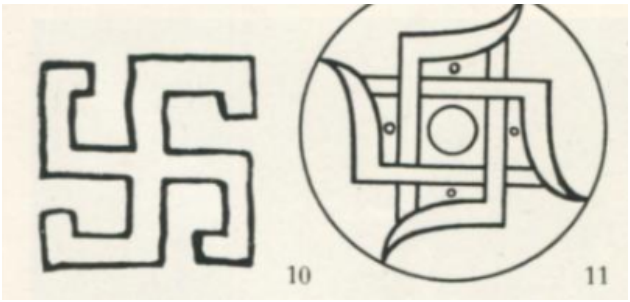

**In total, sixty-five symbols are associated with Buddha, the first of which is the "swastika", commonly regarded as a symbol of good luck; the fourth is the sau swastika, and the third symbol is formed by the Nandyavarta, which is considered a messenger of joy, Fig. 4. With its intertwined forms, which together form a swastika, it is reminiscent of the Cretan labyrinthine swastika.**

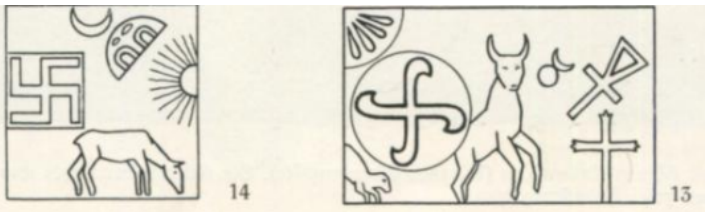
*




**The Jain sect, which differs from the Buddhists in a few but significant points, has the Nandyavarta as its 18th symbol. Unlike the Buddhists, they use the swastika extensively in their religious ceremonies; this corresponds to the use of holy water in the Catholic Church. The members of this sect draw the swastika with great skill by sprinkling a circle of rice flour on the ground, Fig. 1, then drawing the cross beams with their fingers, Fig. 3, and finally forming the swastika into the shape shown above, Fig. 2.**

**Fig. 5 is again a symbol of the Jains. Here, too, they have assigned special meanings to the individual arms of the swastika: the right arm signifies the source of life, the lower arm signifies plant and animal life, the left arm signifies human life, and the upper arm signifies heavenly life, while the three circles above and the crescent moon are explained as the four degrees of existence in the material universe. This scholarly interpretation of the symbol is important because it establishes the cosmic origin of its meaning and because, in this context, it can very well encompass the sun as the origin of all life. This symbol is also used by Hindus. According to M. Taylor, they use the swastika in many other ways - at the beginning of the year, it is painted in red on houses, and at weddings and other celebrations, it is painted in white on the floor and walls of the house. For them, it has taken on the general meaning of a symbol of good luck.**




**In Tibet, where the equal-armed cross predates Buddhism, the swastika became known with the arrival of Buddhism in the 7th century AD. Even today, women wear it as decoration on their skirts. It is placed on the chest of the dead as a symbol of life and rebirth. Figs. 10 and 11 show Tibetan swastikas. The swastika also appears on Indo-Scythian coins in angular or rounded form together with the sun, moon, bull, cross pattée, and the Latin cross. Figs. 13 and 14.**

## Malay Archipelago

**Hooked crosses in a circle, one pointing left and one pointing right, flank the image of the sun in the center above the archway.**

**The swastika is also known in the Malay Archipelago. It can be found, among other places, on priests' robes in connection with the depiction of the sacred white elephant.**

## China

**Fig. 1 Buddha image according to Tao Shih (800 AD, Tang Dynasty). The swastika on the chest of the highest deity is also found in Europe, for example on Apollo (Pg. 64, Fig. 24) or the Celtic god Cernunnos (Pg. 72, Figs. 8, 9). In China, the swastika has become an all-encompassing symbol of good luck and can be found everywhere in hundreds of variations. The original meaning of the cross rising upward again is still recognizable in its letter meaning as a character. With Buddhism, the swastika came to China in the first century.**

**Fig. 2 The abbot of the "Monastery of the Heavenly Boy" (Ningpo; Tien-tung-sze). The lattice panels to the right and left of the monastery entrance show two swastika symbols.**

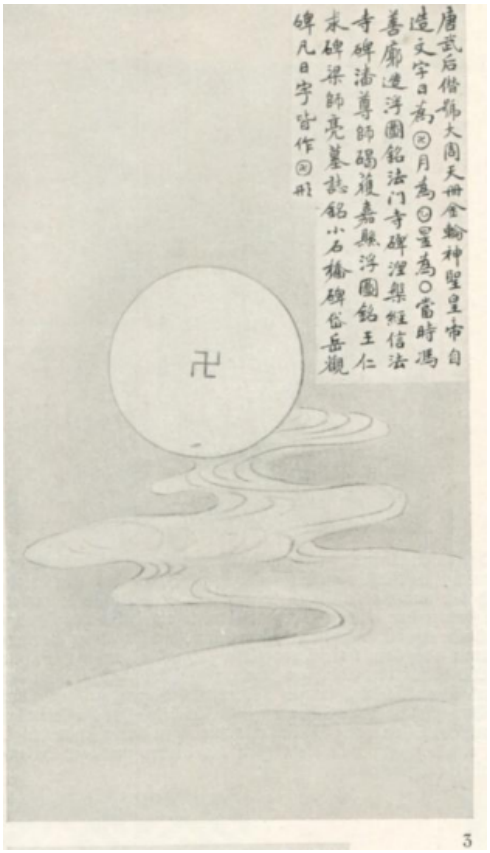


**Fig. 3 Decree of Empress Wu (684-704). This decree introduced the swastika in a circle as a symbol for the sun, a Z-sign in a ring for the moon, and a simple ring as a symbol for the zodiac. In ancient Chinese hieroglyphics, the symbol for the sun was a circle with a center, a meaning that this symbol also had among the Mayans in Central America.**

**Fig. 4 From a report in a book from the Sung Dynasty, according to which the empress of the Southern Tang Dynasty had the swastika affixed to her sacrificial cauldron.**

**Fig. 5 Kung Ping Chung (Sung Dynasty) reports on a popular belief that whoever finds a spider web over fruit, with the threads forming a swastika in the center, will experience exceptional good fortune.**

**Fig. 6 Decree issued by Emperor Tai Tsung (763-779) supplementing the decree issued by Empress Wu prohibiting the use of the swastika as a pattern on silk products in order to preserve its sanctity. This decree has a modern parallel in Germany in the law protecting national symbols.**

**Fig. 7 From a work describing nature. The fruit of the wild mountain date is described as hook-shaped.**

**Fig. 8 From a book by Chu J Tsu, who recounts that a learned Manchu built this garden house, called “Wan Chai,” named after the swastika lattice. “Wan” means not only swastika, but also the number 10,000. For the Chinese, 10,000 is ‘the big number’ and also an expression of infinity, long life, great blessings, and great happiness.**

**Fig. 9 Report by Emperor Li Yuan-Su (Sung Dynasty) on the donation of buffaloes. The buffalo bears the swastika on its forehead as a sign of salvation and protection, very similar to what we find in Crete (see p. 43). Panini (4th century BC) reports from India that the ears of cattle were marked with the swastika. It is therefore not an isolated phenomenon here in China.**

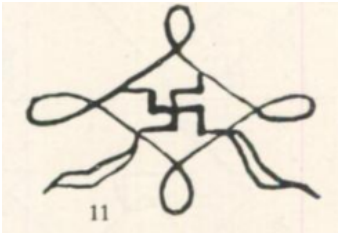


**Fig. 11 Chinese porcelain mark.**

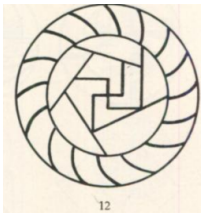


**Fig. 12 From a wall in Nanmen.**

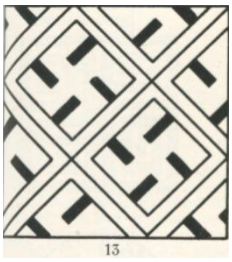


**Fig. 13 From an antique vase.**

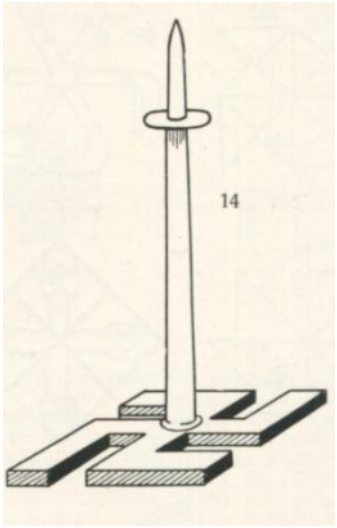
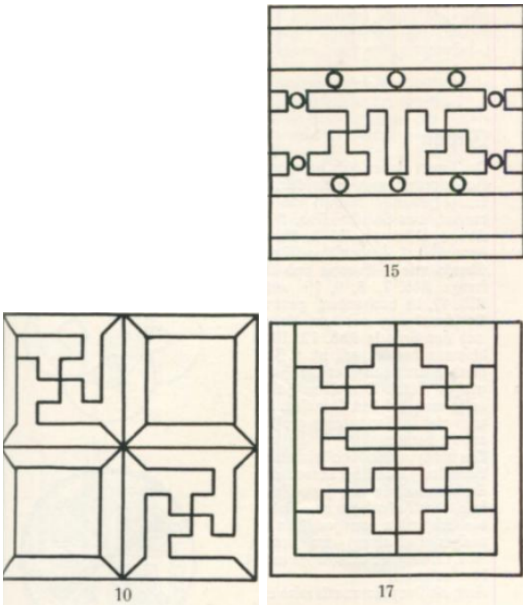


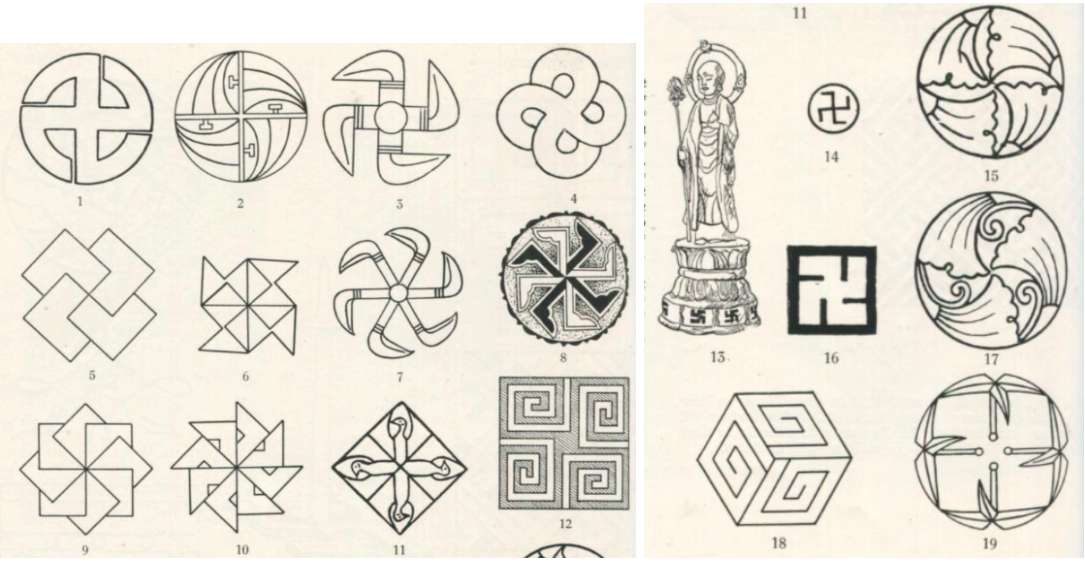

**Fig. 14 Brass candlestick with swastika from Nanking.**

**Fig. 16 From an enamel vase in cloisonné.**




**Figs. 10, 15, 17 Chinese doors and railings.**

## Japan

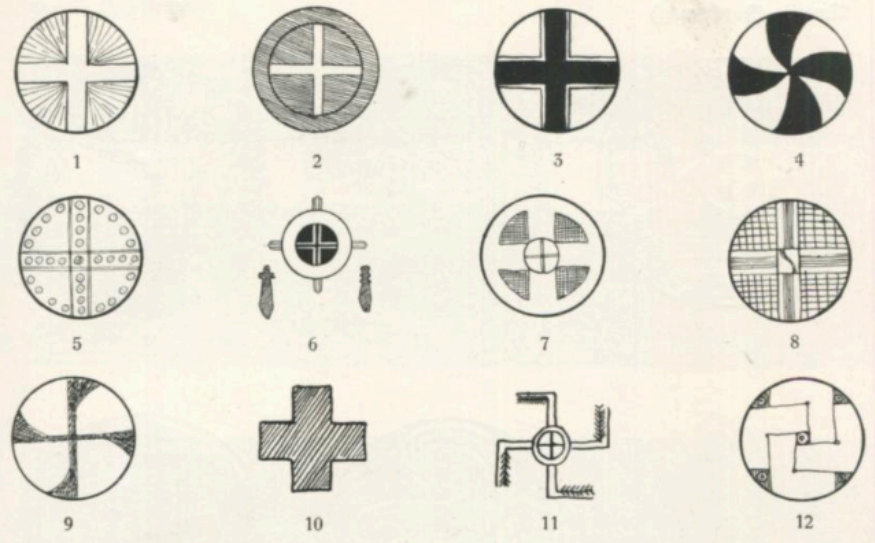


Particularly versatile forms of the swastika have developed in Japan. The swastikas (Japanese: manji) are angular or rounded, made from sickles (Figs. 3 and 7), feet (Fig. 8), plants (Figs. 2, 15, 17, 19), bands (Figs. 1 and 4) or bird heads (Fig. 11). As in Europe, double swastikas (Figs. 7, 8, 9, 10) and tripods (Figs. 17, 18) are also found, as are combinations with the cross (Figs. 5, 6) and the spiral (Fig. 12). Buddhism did not arrive here until the 6th century AD and signifies the number 10,000 = great luck. It has the same numerical value in Chinese culture. Buddhism gave rise to a magnificent artistic era in Japan.

The bronze Buddha statue bears swastikas on its pedestal, above which are lotus flowers, Fig. 13. The swastika also plays a role in Japanese coats of arms. The hereditary princes of Hachisuka of Ava have a white swastika on a brown field, Fig. 16. The staff flag on page 15 should be recalled here.
It is also used as a porcelain mark.

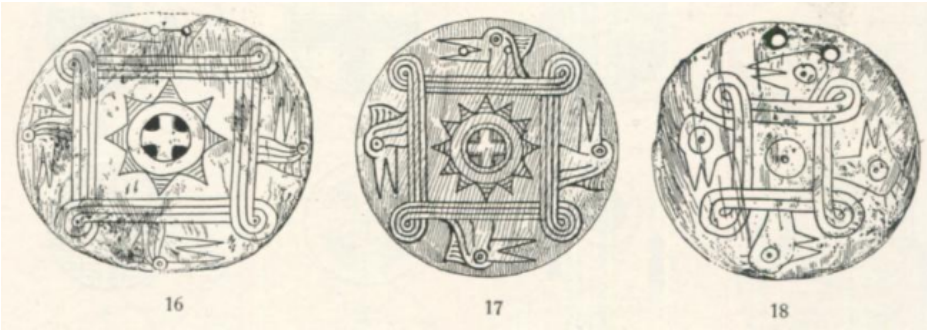
## America

At first glance, it seems impossible to believe that the swastika came to America from Asia via the sea. The spread of such curious things as dolmens (Europe, India, Japan, Central America) or step pyramids along the same line had long been noticed, without anyone being able to explain it. However, direct influences from China have now been clearly established in America in the area of the ancient Aztec empire. Sculptures of the Chinese elephant god and other items have been found (see Wilson, op. cit., as well as further reports from the Smithsonian Institution, Washington; Museum für Völkerkunde, Berlin). In any case, it is entirely possible that the swastika crossed the Bering Strait directly to North America. Recently, however, efforts have also been made to prove a primordial connection between the cultures of America and Europe.

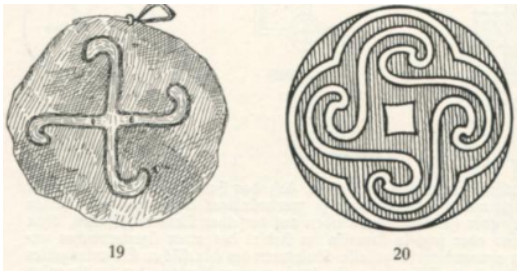



**Figs. 1-12 Overview of the cross, sun wheel, and swastika, as they are particularly common on shell discs from Native American graves in North America.**

**Figs 13-15 In America, we find the same connection between the sun wheel and the swastika. Even in pre-Columbian times, the sun wheel in Fig. 13 meant “day” in the Mexican hieroglyphs of the Aztecs, while the swastika in a curved circle, Fig. 15, meant “year,” and the sign for “time” was an image in which a cross and a wheel, a circle and a sun image in a square (the four corners of the world) were merged into one sign, Fig. 14.**




**Figs. 16-18 Shell discs from Indian graves in Tennessee (USA). Amulets. They also show the fusion of the sun wheel and the swastika, whereby it is particularly striking that the latter is formed from bird heads, which is also found in the art of the Germanic migration period and in animal ornamentation of the 6th-9th centuries AD. The bird heads were considered by the Indians to be symbols of the thunderbird.**




**Figs. 19 and 20 War shields of the Pima Indians. Among the Pimas and Navajos of New Mexico, the swastika has even become the symbol of the followers of the sun religion.**

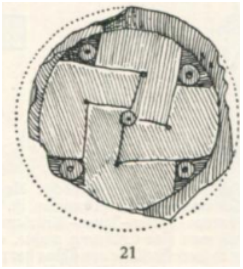



**Fig. 21 Shell disc whose design represents the fusion of three symbols: cross, swastika, and sun wheel.**

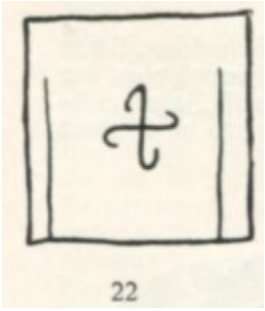
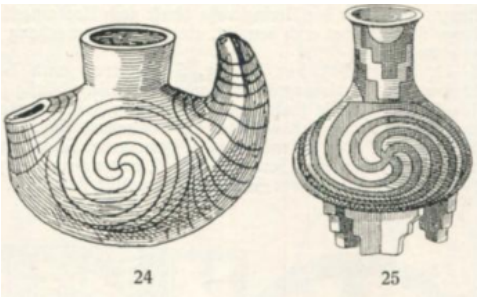
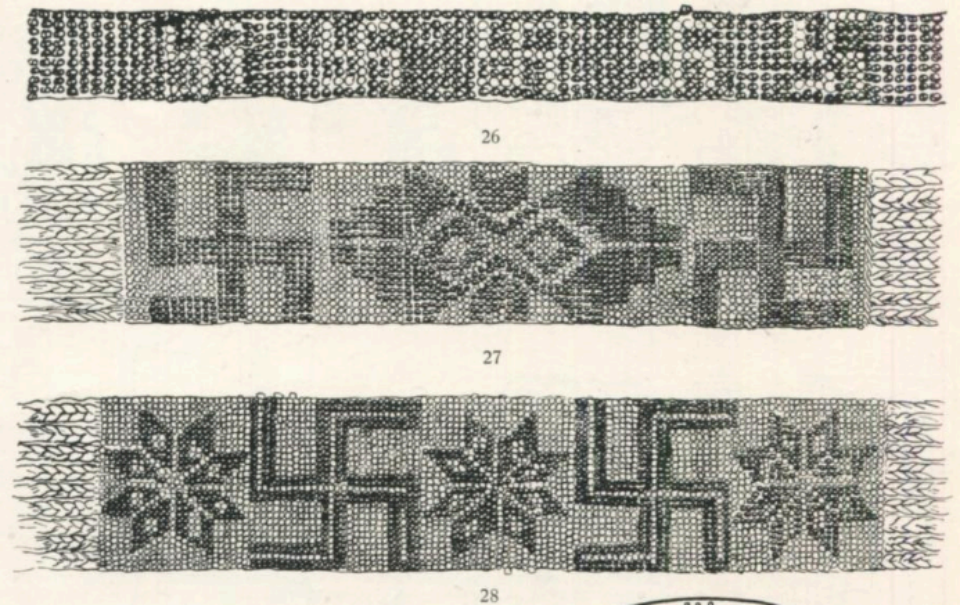



**Fig. 22 War symbol of the Kansas Indians.**

**Fig. 23 Sculpture from the city of the ancient Mayans: Majapan, with a five-spoked sun wheel and swastika.**




**Figs. 24 and 25 Two prehistoric vessels showing the swastika as the center of spirals. The spiral is also a symbol of the sun.**




**Figs. 26-28 Magic chains of medicine men, which played an important role in their activities.**

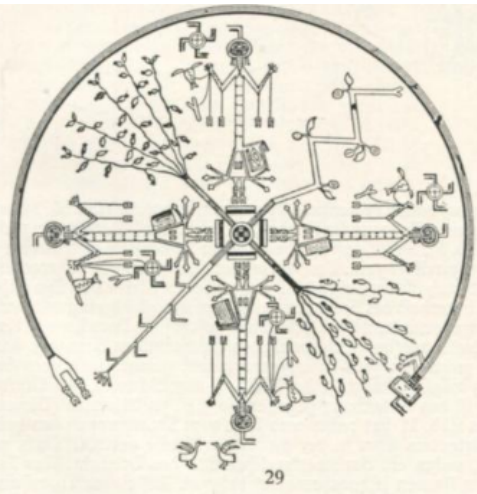



**Fig. 29 Dry paintings of the Navajo Indians. Such paintings were scattered on flat ground by medicine men using colored sand, then the deities depicted were invoked in circular dances and begged for help. Each of the four deities arranged in a cross shape carries a swastika, while the hooks on the head of each god unite all four into a fifth swastika.**

**Fig. 30 Pubic coverings of Brazilian Indian women (prehistoric). Here we find the swastika used in the same place as in Troy and Greece.**

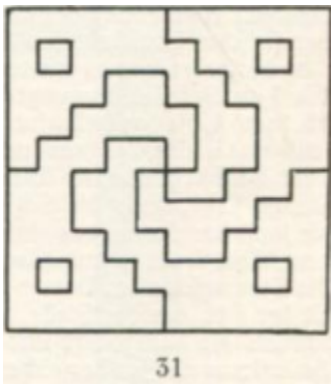
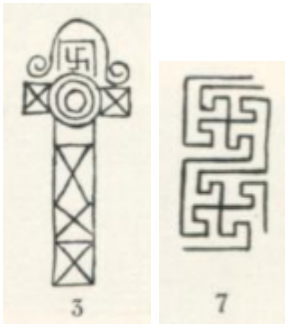
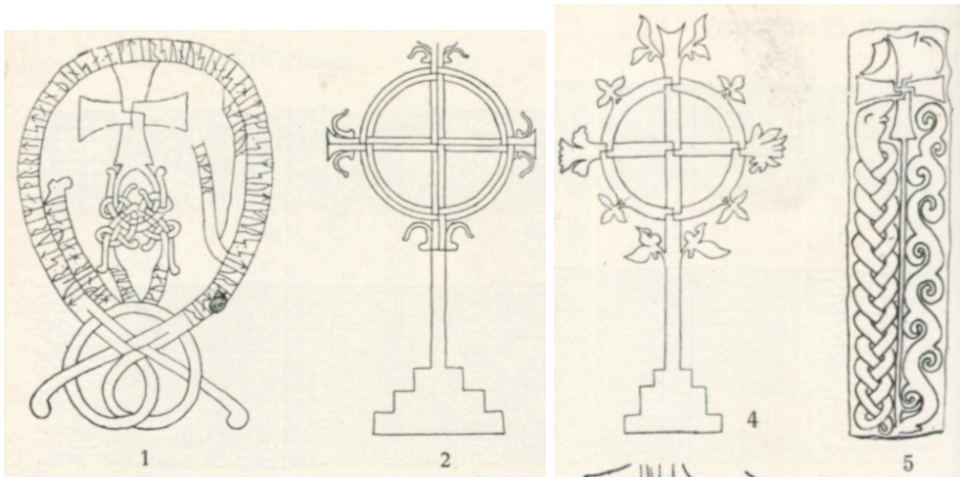



**Fig. 31 Peruvian fabric from Ancon.**

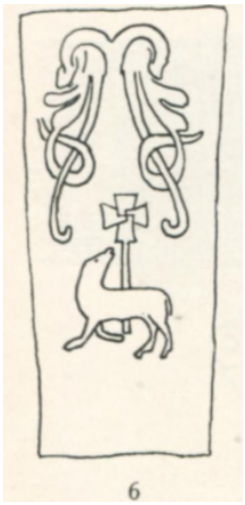
## Nordic Christianity




**Quite independently of the south, where the swastika was adopted by Christianity (see Fig. 7, St. George's Church, Oberzell, Reichenau), the same process took place in the north, perhaps through the influence of Irish clergy (Irish gravestone from the 6th century, Fig. 3). Even on pagan runestones, a fusion of the swastika with the equal-armed cross can be seen.**




**The number of such runestones is extraordinarily large, Fig. 1 being one example. Runestone gravestones also include those created in 1449 in Lye on Gotland, Figs. 2 and 4, which show the swastika five times within the sun wheel and are simultaneously linked to the idea of the tree of life and the world tree through plant ornamentation. The gravestone in Fig. 5 comes from Aarhus Cathedral - under the swastika (in the center of the equal-armed cross), which stands on a pole, is the snake on the left and the tree of life, which has become a plant ornament, on the right. Just as the lamb usually bears the simple cross, in the church in Dalby, Skåne, the lamb bears a swastika.**



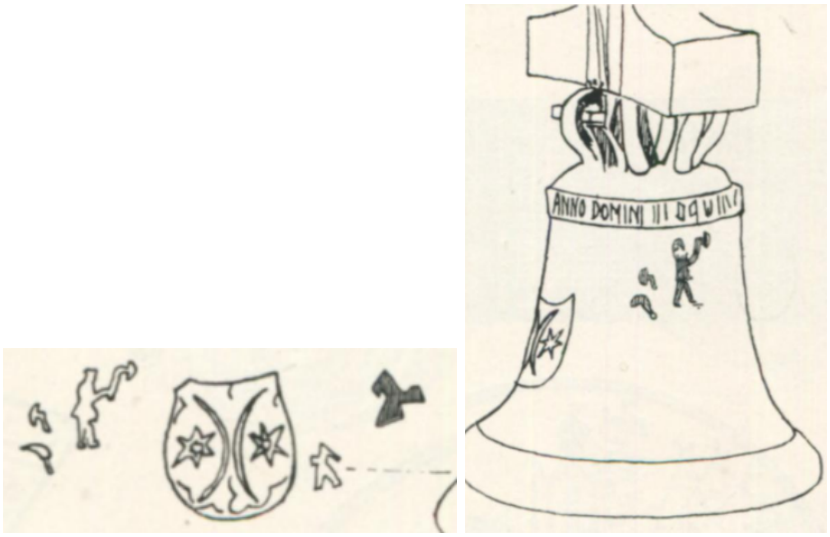
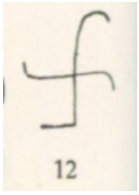




**Fig. 6 The swastika is also cast on church bells, for example in Utterslev (Denmark) in 1574. The storm bell of Aarhus Cathedral, Fig. 11 has Saint Olaf with the axe on the right and left of the city coat of arms, representing the place of the old axe god Thor in the Christian church. To his left is the holy axe and sickle again, and to his right a craft symbol and the tripod.**

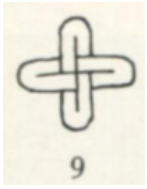



**In Iceland, the swastika is known as a magic symbol under the name “Thor's hammer.” Fig. 12 is engraved on a copper Thor's hammer, which in 1858 was still in the possession of a woman who practiced witchcraft.**

8

**At the intersection of the cross beams in Fig. 3 are equilateral sun circles and above them the swastika. The English coin from 1758, Fig. 8, bears the tripod in human form with the inscription: "Quocunque jeceris stabit" ("Wherever you throw it, it will stand"). Attempts have therefore been made to interpret the meaning and the figure scholastically.**

Numerous tripods from the 13th and 14th centuries have been found in churches; they are often located on the keystone of the vault in the choir, i.e., at the most important point of the church.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**The ribbon cross or Solomon's knot is very common in the north. Example Fig. 9 from the church in Gjording (Ringkjöbing district).**

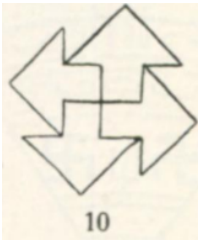
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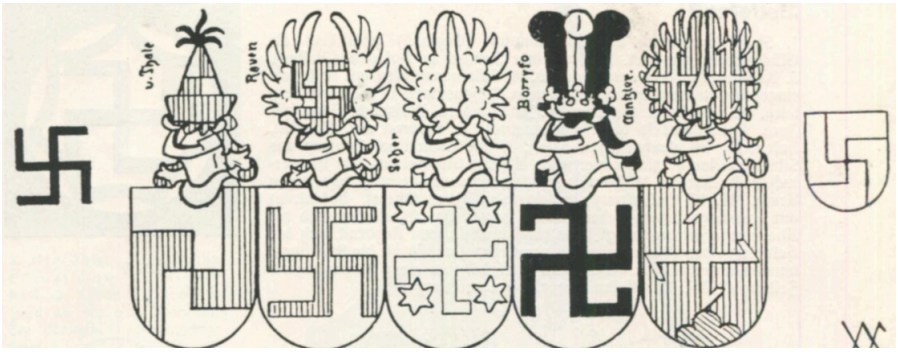
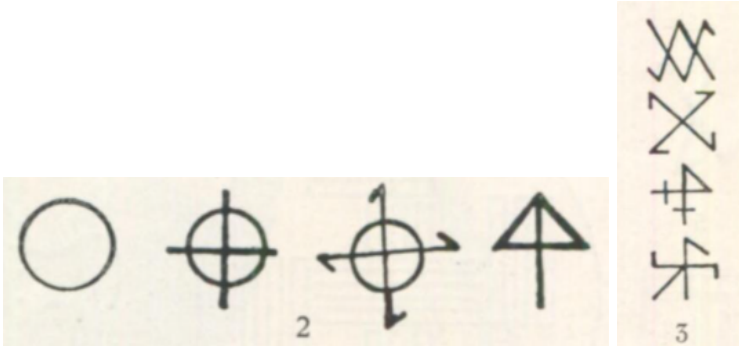
**Fig. 10 is the swastika of the Lapps made from four arrowheads.**

## Coats of Arms, Trademarks, Chisel Marks



**The symbolic value of the swastika is particularly striking on coats of arms, linking it in a sense to the weapons of Germanic antiquity, Fig. 1.**

In addition to sacred art, it also lived on throughout the Middle Ages in folk art, and numerous examples can be found in every museum dedicated to it.




**Numerous ancient Germanic symbols have been preserved in medieval stonemason's marks and trademarks, similar to house signs, and the connection with runes cannot be dismissed. It is particularly curious that in the Middle Ages, the trademark for 100 was not only the circle and the sun wheel, but also the swastika, Fig. 2, whereby 100 in the medieval conception formed the basis for all planetary calculations in mysticism, a similar valuation of the swastika as we found in the Far East among the Chinese, where the swastika also has the value of 10,000. Particularly noteworthy is the engraving on a baptismal font in Münster i. W., where the swastika is engraved in a series of runic symbols (where it certainly has a symbolic meaning, Fig. 3). Körner ("Handbuch der Heroldskunst") attempts to read these symbols according to his own key and interprets the swastika as "the sun triumphs," thus arriving at the same conclusion as the archaeological observations on the swastika, but from completely different premises.**

**An afterlife of Old Germanic beliefs undoubtedly exists in the custom of the Fattiklubba in Sweden. Thor was the god of hospitality and his symbol was Thor's hammer. Until modern times, the custom of beggars going from house to house with a wooden hammer persisted here. It was a kind of carte blanche, allowing the poor man going from door to door to find shelter and hospitality, Fig. 4. Thor was particularly associated with the swastika as his symbol, so that the old Thor tradition has clearly lived on in the beggar's hammer. (The piece shown here dates from 1771.) In Iceland, the swastika is still known today as Thor's hammer.**

**Fig. 1 A chair backrest insert from Southampton (England) is considered a lucky charm here.**

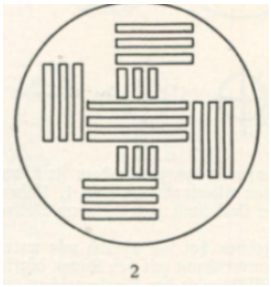



**Fig. 2 From a spindle in Bologna (Italy).**

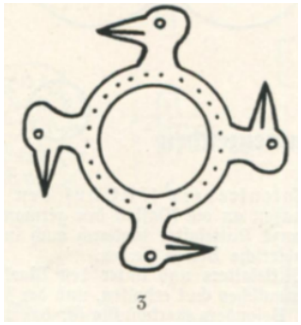



**Fig. 3 Bone carving from Finland.**

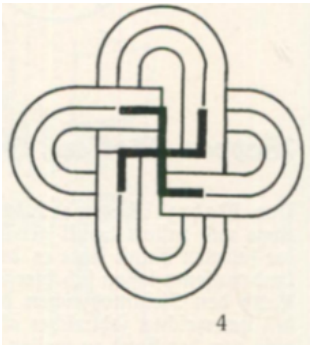



**Fig. 4 Solomon's knot with a swastika symbol found in Genoa.**

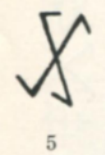



**Fig. 5 House brand in Astede, Oldenburg.**

**Fig. 6 Roof tiles from the 16th century. Maisprach, Swiss Jura.**

**Fig. 7 Trademark of Marsala wine.**

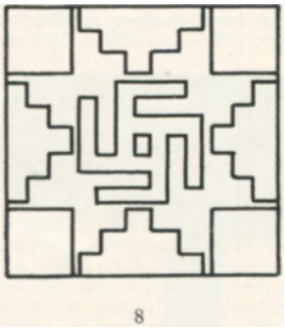
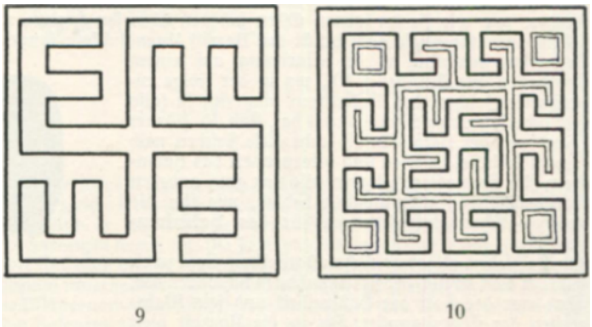



**Fig. 8 Embroidery from Bosnia, swastika in an equal-armed cross.**




**Figs. 9, 10 Embroidery on shirts from Siberia. Compare this with the similar embroidery on the Heiligengrabe hunger cloth.**

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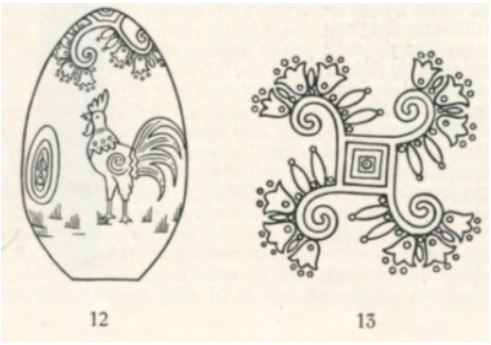
**Fig. 11 German Easter egg, swastika in an equal-armed cross.**



12 13

**Figs. 12, 13 Swastika on a Russian Easter egg; swastika with spring flowers next to a rooster. The egg as a symbol of resurrection already expresses in itself that the swastika is the symbol of resurrection and the meaning of life; the spring flowers only emphasize this meaning.**

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14

**Fig. 14 From a Copenhagen newspaper (1933). The swastika as a shipping flag.**

**Fig. 1 The new flag of the Prussian Prime Minister. In keeping with the old tradition of Prussian regimental flags, the swastika is located in the center of a black iron cross surrounded by a laurel wreath in a circular field.**

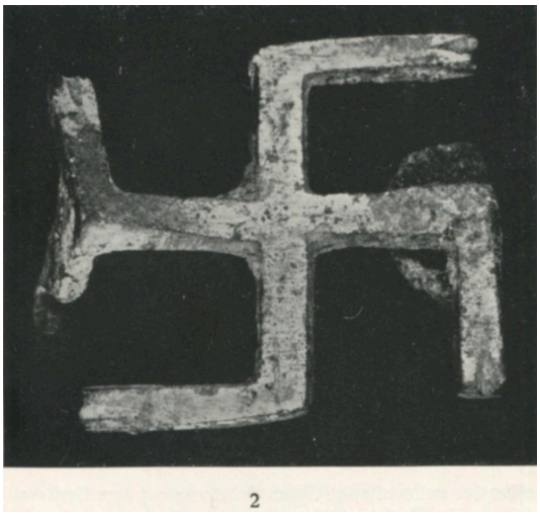

**Fig. 2 The city of Homburg presented our Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler with this 2,000-year-old swastika from the Saalburg Museum, along with a honorary citizenship certificate.**

**Fig. 3 The town of Gandersheim has incorporated the swastika into its postmark. This is one example of the many ways in which the symbol of the new Germany has come to life.**

**Fig. 4 “The dead are marching...!” (Heroes' graves from the Nazi uprising at the Luisenstädter Kirchhof cemetery in Berlin.)**

**Fig. 5 A moment in world history. On March 21st, 1933, Reich President and Reich Minister Göring opened the German Reichstag in the Kroll Opera House by raising his hand in the Hitler salute.**

**Fig. 6 Swastika and cross. The "German Christians" march to a festive service in Berlin Cathedral on the occasion of the Reichstag meeting of the "German Christian" student combat league. The flag of the German Christians is a combination of the swastika and the Latin cross.**

**Figs. 7, 8 From the Brown House in Munich. The swastika monument in the garden of the Brown House. The portal of the Brown House is decorated with swastikas and the imperial insignia.**

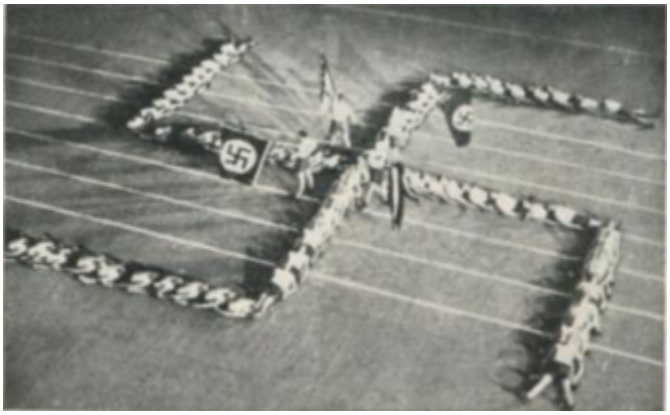

**Fig. 9 Living swastika. From a police sports demonstration at Berlin's Sportpalast.**

**Fig. 10 A festive day in Munich. Swastika flags fly on German Art Day.**

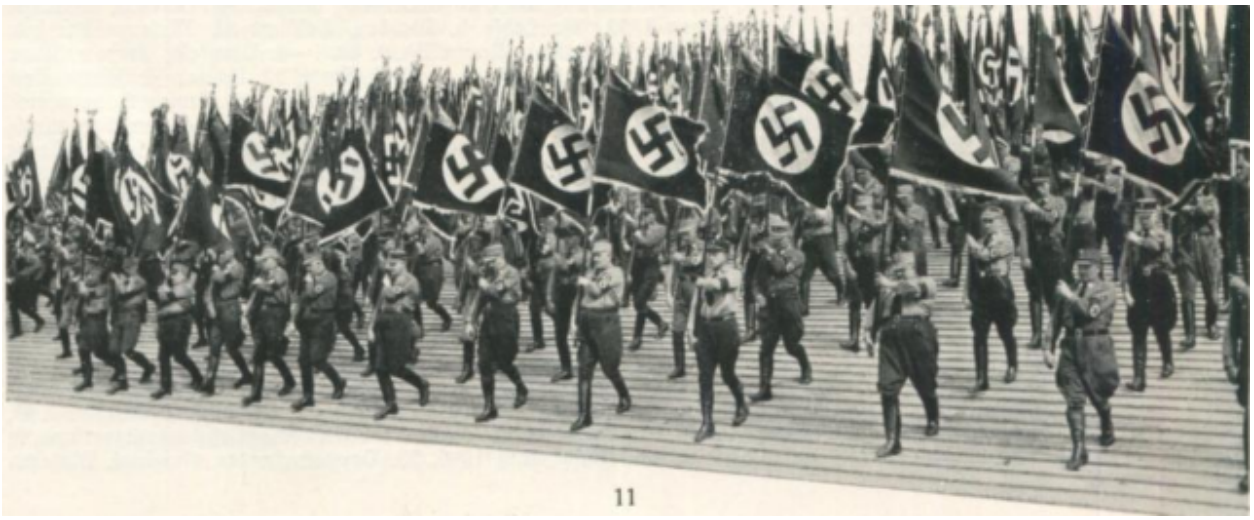


**Fig. 11 The swastika in the Third Reich. From the party congress in Nuremberg. March of flags on September 2nd, 1933, on the Zeppelin Field.**